

THE CLEVELAND ORCHESTRA

FRANZ WELSER-MÖST MUSIC DIRECTOR

 Severance Hall

Thursday evening, **February 4**, 2010, at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday evening, **February 6**, 2010, at 8:00 p.m.

Sunday afternoon, **February 7**, 2010, at 3:00 p.m.

Pierre Boulez, *conductor*

O910
SEASON
clevelandorchestra.com

OLIVIER MESSIAEN
(1908-1992)

L'Ascension, four méditations symphoniques

1. Majesté du Christ demandant sa gloire à son Père
[*Majesty of Christ Asking Glory from His Father*]
2. Alléluias sereins d'une âme qui désire le ciel
[*Serene Hallelujahs of a Soul Desiring Heaven*]
3. Alléluia sur la trompette, alléluia sur la cymbale
[*Hallelujah on the Trumpet, Hallelujah on the Cymbal*]
4. Prière du Christ montant vers son Père
[*Christ's Prayer Ascending to His Father*]

MAURICE RAVEL
(1875-1937)

Piano Concerto in G major

1. Allegramente
2. Adagio assai
3. Presto

PIERRE-LAURENT AIMARD, *piano*

INTERMISSION

MAURICE RAVEL

Piano Concerto in D major for the Left Hand

PIERRE-LAURENT AIMARD, *piano*

CLAUDE DEBUSSY
(1862-1918)

Ibéria from *Images*

1. Par les rues et par les chemins [*In the Streets and Byways*]
2. Les parfums de la nuit [*The Fragrances of the Night*]
3. Le matin d'un jour de fête [*The Morning of a Festival Day*]

PLEASE NOTE that these performances are being recorded for future CD release. Please remember to disarm electronic alarms on watches and to turn your cell phones off prior to the start of the concert.

*Pierre-Laurent Aimard's appearance with The Cleveland Orchestra is made possible by a contribution to the Orchestra's Guest Artist Fund from **The Sherwick Fund**.*

The evening concerts will end at about 9:45 p.m. and Sunday at about 4:45 p.m.

RADIO BROADCAST Saturday evening's concert is being broadcast live on WCLV (104.9 FM). The concert will be rebroadcast as part of regular weekly programming on WCLV on Sunday afternoon, March 28, at 4:00 p.m.

INTRODUCING THE PROGRAM

Orchestra *à la française*

IF YOU LIVED in Paris during the first half of the 20th century, you could not only experience history in the making: you could actually *hear* it, if you happened to be a concertgoer.

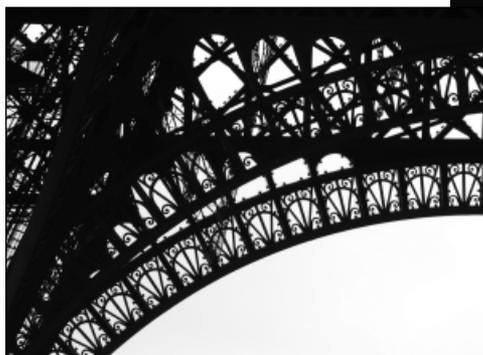
This was the era when Claude Debussy created an entirely new language to reflect poetry, images, and fragrances in music, through a series of pathbreaking works from the *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* to the ballet *Jeux*.

A younger contemporary of Debussy who shared his sensitivity to these impressions of the world, Maurice Ravel changed course after World War I and embraced jazz and 18th-century influences in the latter part of his career.

Olivier Messiaen, although influenced by both Debussy and Ravel, cut loose from them in his twenties, basing his work on religious foundations and discovering whole new harmonic worlds in the process.

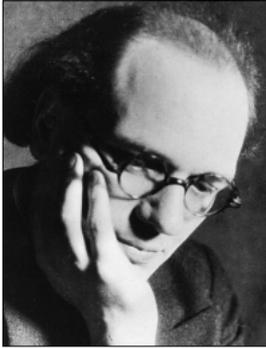
—PETER LAKI

Peter Laki is a musicologist and frequent lecturer on classical music. He is a visiting associate professor at Bard College and a contributing writer to The Cleveland Orchestra's program books.



L'Ascension, Four Symphonic Meditations

composed 1932-33



BY
**Olivier
MESSIAEN**

BORN
December 10, 1908
Avignon, France

DIED
April 28, 1992
Paris

SOME COMPOSERS labor for years before finding their own voice. But Olivier Messiaen, even in his earliest works, sounds like Messiaen and no one else. This is all the more surprising when we realize that in the early 1930s Messiaen had not yet discovered the sources that so much of his later music was built upon. In *L'Ascension*, we find neither birdsong nor rhythms derived from the Indian raga system. Rather, we see (or hear) Messiaen's language emerge before our very eyes as passages influenced by his early models — chiefly Debussy and Stravinsky — begin to evolve in entirely new directions.

One bedrock of Messiaen's music was, in any case, present from the start. This was the composer's Catholic faith, which is behind every note he composed — from his earliest works, *Le banquet céleste* ("The Celestial Feast") to his last, *Éclairs sur l'au-delà* ("Flashes of the Otherworld"). Thanks in large part to this strong religious foundation, Messiaen's music always preserves its seriousness. This does not preclude the expression of serene, even joyful feelings, but the overall sense always remains majestic and dignified.

Messiaen was only 25 when he completed *L'Ascension*. He had graduated from the Paris Conservatoire just three years earlier. Since 1931, he had been the organist at the Church of the Trinity in Paris, a position he would hold for the rest of his life. In his largest orchestral work to date, he reflected on the Feast of the Ascension. Here, Christ's reunion with His Father gives cause for joy, but also for the contemplation of a deep mystery. Messiaen prefaced each movement with a quote from the Bible or the Catholic liturgy to set the tone.

Movement 1. *Majesty of Christ Asking for Glory from His Father*. "Father, the hour has come: glorify Your Son, so that Your Son may glorify You" (John 17:1). Scored for wind instruments alone, this movement is in an extremely slow tempo and is almost entirely homophonic (all the voices play in the same rhythm much of the time). Many of the chords are still tonal — the progressions often end with perfect triads. But in many harmonies extra notes are added to the common ones to produce special sonorities that are instantly recognizable as Messiaen's.

Movement 2. *Serene Alleluias of a Soul Desiring Heaven*.

“O God, we pray you, let us dwell in Heaven in spirit” (Mass of the Ascension). The opening of the movement, again scored for winds alone, presents a unison melody of the same type as those Messiaen later transcribed during his ornithological field trips. It is interesting that long before he began the active study of birdsong, he already heard its melodic shape and rhythmic freedom in his head. This prototype of Messiaen’s later “bird” themes is combined with murmuring string sounds; the movement ends with a recapitulation of the theme in the winds enveloped by a radiant outburst of string tremolos and harmonics.

Movement 3. *Alleluia on a Trumpet, Alleluia on the Cymbals*. “The Lord has risen to the sound of the trumpet. . . Nations, all clap your hands; celebrate God with cries of gladness!” (Psalm 47). This is the most traditional movement of the four. The influence of Debussy and of Messiaen’s teacher Paul Dukas is much stronger than elsewhere. (It is significant that in the organ version of *L’Ascension*, Messiaen replaced this movement with an entirely new piece, *Transports de joie d’une âme devant la gloire du Christ qui est la sienne*, “Raptures of a Soul over the Glory of Christ which is Its Own”). The movement opens with lively dance rhythms and includes a slower section that is probably closer to Ravel than anything Messiaen ever wrote. The fast tempo then resumes and the music becomes more and more excited. After a brief fanfare in a clear E-flat major, the movement ends with a conventional (but highly effective) *fugato* — another Messiaen rarity.

Movement 4. *Prayer of Christ Ascending to His Father*. “Father . . . I have revealed Your name to humanity. . . Now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world and I come to you” (John 17: 1, 6, and 11). This movement is scored for strings only. The entire first violin section plays the top voice with mutes. The other voices are played without mutes by selected soloists from the orchestra: five second violins, five violas, and two cellos. The tempo is even slower than in the first movement; the texture is again homophonic, and the harmonies iridescent and otherworldly. The music climbs higher and higher (in keeping with the idea of Ascension) and ends on a resplendent dominant-seventh chord. According to Western musical conventions, this chord would call for resolution, but in this context, the lack of resolution is a perfect ending point for this quite extraordinary set of harmonies.

—PETER LAKI

At a Glance

Messiaen composed L’Ascension for orchestra in 1932-33. (In 1934, he arranged three of the four movements for organ, replacing the third movement with new music.) The first performance of the orchestral version was given in Paris in February 1935, conducted by Robert Siohan. The United States premiere took place in 1947 under the direction of Serge Koussevitzky.

This work runs about 30 minutes in performance. Messiaen scored it for 3 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 3 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (triangle, cymbals, tambourine, bass drum), and strings.

The Cleveland Orchestra first performed Messiaen’s L’Ascension in January 1948, under George Szell’s direction. The most recent performances were led by Franz Welser-Möst in February 1998.

Piano Concerto in G major

composed 1929-31

Piano Concerto in D major for the Left Hand

composed 1929-31



BY

**Maurice
RAVEL**

BORN

March 7, 1875

Ciboure,

Basses-Pyrénées

DIED

December 28, 1937

Paris

SOME OF THE MOST original piano music in the first half of the 20th century was written by Maurice Ravel. In the early *Jeux d'eau* (“Water Games,” 1901) and the great cycles *Miroirs* (1904-05) and *Gaspard de la nuit* (“Treasurer of the Night,” 1908), Ravel developed what he himself called “a special type of writing for the piano,” and he defended his priority against critics who tried to trace his style to that of Debussy.

A highly competent pianist himself, Ravel was a frequent performer of his own music (his performing survives on several recordings). Thus, it is not entirely surprising that he should want to write a concerto; what *is* surprising is that it took him so long to do so.

For years, Ravel seems to have followed the example of Debussy and Fauré, who were not interested in concertos. He toyed with the idea as early as 1906, according to biographer Arbie Orenstein. At that time, he was thinking about a concerto based on Basque themes, from Ravel’s native region in the Pyrénées. The projected work even had a title: *Zaspiak-Bat*, which means “The Seven Are One” in the Basque language — an allusion to the unity of the four Spanish and three French Basque provinces. But *Zaspiak-Bat* seems never to have progressed beyond the stage of initial sketches; World War I intervened, and Ravel, who had enlisted for military duty, complained in a letter to a friend: “*Impossible to continue* *Zaspiak-Bat*, *the documents having remained in Paris.*” Instead, the composer took up other projects, and the concerto plans remained on the back burner until the late 1920s.

It was in 1928, after his American tour (which included time in Cleveland, where he conducted his own works with The Cleveland Orchestra), that Ravel began seriously to think about a concerto again. In the wake of this tour — and the recent, wildly successful premiere of *Boléro* — Ravel wanted to make the most of his popularity, and decided to return to the concert stage as a pianist, as his friend Igor Stravinsky had done a few years earlier. His work on a piano concerto for himself was interrupted by Paul Wittgenstein’s commission to write a concerto for the left hand

only. Ravel worked on both concertos more or less at the same time. Asked by music critic Michel D. Calvocoressi to compare the two pieces, Ravel made the following statement:

“Planning the two piano concertos simultaneously was an interesting experience. The one in which I shall appear as the interpreter is a concerto in the truest sense of the word: I mean that it is written very much in the same spirit as those of Mozart and Saint-Saëns. The music of a concerto should, in my opinion, be light-hearted and brilliant, and not aim at profundity or at dramatic effects. It has been said of certain great classics that their concertos were written not ‘for’ but ‘against’ the piano. I heartily agree. I had intended to entitle this concerto ‘Divertissement.’ Then it occurred to me that there was no need to do so, because the very title “Concerto” should be sufficiently clear.

“The concerto for left hand alone is very different. It contains many jazz effects, and the writing is not so light. In a work of this kind, it is essential to give the impression of a texture no thinner than that of a part written for both hands. For the same reason, I resorted to a style that is much nearer to that of the more solemn kind of traditional concerto.”

One has to understand Ravel’s way of thinking to “un-Ravel” some of the puzzles contained in this statement. One might be surprised by the implication that Mozart’s concertos are without “profundity” or “dramatic effects.” Ravel, however, understood those terms in a very specific way, and the real meaning of his remark was what he left unsaid. By the “great classics” whose concertos are “against the piano,” he probably meant Brahms (and possibly Tchaikovsky), whose expansive Romanticism he had been at pains to avoid. He had boundless admiration for Mozart, as had, among French composers before him, Camille Saint-Saëns; by mentioning these two names, Ravel defined an artistic lineage for himself and, by the same token, implicitly distanced himself from the Beethoven-Wagner-Franck-d’Indy line with which he was out of sympathy.

Ravel emphasized his debt to Mozart in the G-major Concerto, but there are also many signs of jazz influence in the piece, particularly in the first movement. Ravel had been interested in jazz since the early 1920s, when it first became the rage in the Parisian clubs that he frequented. He had included a “Blues” movement in his Sonata for Violin and Piano, written between 1923 and 1927. His enthusiasm grew considerably, however, after his visit to the United States. At a party given

Concerto in G major At a Glance

Ravel composed both of his piano concertos in 1929-31. The G-major Concerto’s first performance was on January 14, 1932, at a Ravel Festival concert at the Salle Pleyel in Paris, with the composer conducting the Lamoureux Orchestra; the soloist was Marguerite Long, to whom the concerto was dedicated. The concerto’s first performances in North America were given concurrently on April 22, 1932, by the Boston Symphony Orchestra (conducted by Serge Koussevitzky and with pianist Jesús María Sanromá) and the Philadelphia Orchestra (with conductor Leopold Stokowski and pianist Sylvan Levin).

This concerto runs about 20 minutes in performance. Ravel scored it for flute, piccolo, oboe, english horn, E-flat (high) and B-flat (regular) clarinet, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, trumpet, trombone, timpani, percussion (bass drum, snare drum, cymbals, triangle, whip, tamtam, woodblock), harp, and strings.

The Cleveland Orchestra first performed Ravel’s G-major Concerto in March 1955, with George Szell conducting and Grant Johannesen playing the piano part. The most recent performances were given in February 2007, with Philippe Jordan and pianist Angela Hewitt.

in New York in honor of his 53rd birthday, Ravel met George Gershwin, of whose *Rhapsody in Blue* (1924) he was very fond. Gershwin asked Ravel to take him on as a pupil, but Ravel declined, saying, “*You would only lose the spontaneous quality of your melodies and end up writing bad Ravel.*”

The **first movement** of the G-major concerto has many of the trappings of classical sonata form: a succession of contrasting themes, and a clearly recognizable moment at which the recapitulation begins. But the emphasis, as always with Ravel, is not so much on motivic development as on the juxtaposition of self-contained melodies. The first of these melodies is introduced by the piccolo in a very fast tempo; the piano accompanies it with lively figurations. This theme has been said to suggest a Basque folk melody — and it probably contains material from the abandoned *Zaspia-Bat* concerto. After this first theme, the tempo slows down, and the high-pitched E-flat clarinet plays the first of several jazz-related motifs. The movement, which remained true to Ravel’s original “*Divertissement*” idea, has a magnificent piano cadenza at the end, preceded by two other striking solo passages, one for the harp, and one in which one woodwind instrument after another plays virtuoso flourishes against the sustained melody of the first horn.

The **second movement** opens with a long, expressive piano solo. It is a single uninterrupted phrase that goes on for more than three minutes; after a while, the piano is joined by the flute, oboe, and clarinet. There is a middle section where the piano plays in a faster motion against the slow-moving melodies in the orchestra. The initial long phrase then returns, played by the english horn, and accompanied by the crystalline thirty-second notes of the piano. Ravel said that he had modelled this movement on the “*Larghetto*” from Mozart’s Clarinet Quintet (K581); the connection is subtle, but can be clearly heard in the softly moving long phrases in 3/4 time and the rich ornamentation of the melodic lines.

The **final movement** is a lively romp in perpetual motion. Like the opening movement, it is a cavalcade of themes, including allusions to marches, dances, and folk songs, and containing some jazzy “smears” in the trombones and demanding solos for the woodwinds. The high jinks continue until the timpani and the bass drum put an abrupt end to the music.

As he said in the statement quoted above, Ravel was planning to play the piano part in his concerto himself. Sadly, he was prevented from doing so by the onset of the illness that proved

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fatal. He developed a progressively incapacitating nervous disorder, which made it impossible for him to play the piano, although in 1932 he could still conduct. He entrusted the solo part to Marguerite Long, a great pianist who had been a close friend and dedicated performer of his works for many years, and they took the Concerto in G major on tour to some twenty European cities.

In January 1933, Ravel conducted the premiere of his Concerto for the Left Hand. Shortly afterwards, he finished the three songs *Don Quichotte à Dulcinée* for voice and orchestra. Soon, however, he was no longer able to read music or sign his name, much less to compose (though his hearing, his musical judgement, and his intelligence in general remained unimpaired).

The G-major Concerto remained Ravel's penultimate composition, a fact belied by the work's freshness and youthful vigor. One may understand Ravel's distress when, in the last year of his life and gravely ill, he burst into tears: "*I still have so much music in my head. I have said nothing. I have so much more to say.*"

FOR THE PARIS PREMIERE of his Piano Concerto for the Left Hand, Ravel made the following comments:



“The initial idea for the concerto for the left hand, which I will soon conduct with the Paris Symphony Orchestra, dates from a trip I made to Vienna three years ago.

*“During my stay in Vienna, which was occupied by rehearsals at the Opera of *l'enfant et les sortilèges* and by Mme Ida Rubinstein's performances in which I conducted *La Valse* and *Boléro*, I had the occasion to hear the Austrian pianist Paul Wittgenstein. His right hand had been amputated following a war injury, and he performed a concerto for the left hand alone by Richard Strauss.*

*“A severe limitation of this sort poses a rather arduous problem for the composer. The attempts at resolving this problem, moreover, are extremely rare, and the best known among them are the *Six Etudes for the Left Hand* by Saint-Saëns. Because of their brevity and sectionalization, they avoid the most formidable aspect of the problem, which is to maintain interest in a work of extended scope while utilizing such limited means.*

“The fear of difficulty, however, is never as keen as the pleasure of contending with it, and, if possible, of overcoming it. That is why I acceded to Wittgenstein's request to compose a concerto for him. I carried out my task with enthusiasm, and it was completed in a year, which represents a minimum delay for me.”

Paul Wittgenstein (1887-1961), brother of the famous philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, had commissioned works for left hand from Strauss, Prokofiev, Korngold, and Britten. He always preferred the Strauss work, and even a composition by the completely forgotten Austrian Josef Labor, to Ravel's masterpiece. His preferences clearly were with German-speaking late Romantics.

In the interview with critic Michel D. Calvocoressi, Ravel spoke about the jazz influences in the concerto's fast section, and the motivic links between the two sections. What he didn't talk about was the work's haunting, gloomy undertone.

In fact, dark colors predominate from the beginning as the work opens, most unusually, with a contrabassoon solo. It is quite possible that the encounter with Wittgenstein brought back some of Ravel's own war memories. After all, he had also served in the war — on the opposite side from Wittgenstein — as a truck driver. Ravel expert Arbie Orenstein sees the Concerto for the Left Hand as “a culmination of Ravel's longstanding pre-occupation, one might say obsession, with the notion of death.” It is certain that this concerto is a deeply tragic work, in stark contrast to its companion in G major.

In his above-mentioned article, Ravel gave the following formal outline of his work:

*“The concerto is divided into two parts which are played without pause. It begins with a **slow introduction**, which stands in contrast to the powerful entrance of theme one; this theme will later be offset by a second idea, marked ‘*espressivo*,’ which is treated pianistically as though written for two hands, with an accompaniment figure weaving about the melodic line.*”

*“The **second part** is a scherzo based upon two rhythmic figures. A new element suddenly appears in the middle, a sort of ostinato figure extending over several measures which are indefinitely repeated but constantly varied in their underlying harmony, and over which innumerable rhythmic patterns are introduced which become increasingly compact. This pulsation increases in intensity and frequency, and following a return of the scherzo, it leads to an expanded reprise of the initial theme of the work and finally to a long cadenza, in which the theme of the introduction and the various elements noted in the beginning of the concerto contend with one another until they are brusquely interrupted by a brutal conclusion.”*

—PETER LAKI

Concerto for Left Hand At a Glance

Ravel composed both of his piano concertos in 1929-31. The Concerto for the Left Hand was created on commission from the one-armed pianist Paul Wittgenstein, who gave the first performance on January 5, 1932, in Vienna's Grosser Musikvereinssaal, with Robert Heger conducting. Wittgenstein, who had exclusive performing rights for six years, introduced the concerto to the United States in November 1934 with the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

This concerto runs about 20 minutes in performance. Ravel scored it for 3 flutes (third doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, english horn, 2 clarinets, small clarinet in E-flat, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, harp, strings, and the solo piano.

The Cleveland Orchestra first performed Ravel's Concerto for the Left Hand in February 1939, with the work's dedicatee, Paul Wittgenstein at the piano and Artur Rodzinski conducting. The most recent performance was given at Blossom in August 2009 with Jean-Yves Thibaudet under the direction of James Gaffigan. The most recent subscription performance at Severance Hall was in November 1991, with Alexander Lazarev conducting and Leon Fleisher as soloist.

Ibéria from *Images*

composed 1908



BY
**Claude
DEBUSSY**

BORN
August 22, 1862
St. Germain-en-Laye,
France

DIED
March 25, 1918
Paris

FRENCH MUSICIANS have often been inspired by the rhythms of Spanish music, at least since the time of Bizet's *Carmen* in 1875. Two composers from the generation preceding Debussy in particular owed their fame to their "Spanish" compositions. Edouard Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole* (1875) and Emmanuel Chabrier's *España* (1883) must have been familiar to the young Debussy, who himself wrote the piano piece *La soirée dans Grenade* ("Evening in Grenada") in 1903 (No. 2 of *Estampes*).

It is interesting that, aside from one short trip across the border, Debussy never visited Spain. He knew, however, the music of some contemporary Spanish composers, such as Manuel de Falla and Isaac Albéniz. (The latter had used the title "Iberia" in a magnificent suite for piano published in four volumes between 1906 and 1908.) Falla had warm words of praise for Debussy's *Ibéria*, which he claimed had "*a considerable and decisive influence on young Spanish composers.*"

The first section of *Ibéria*, entitled *Par les rues et par les chemins* ("In the Streets and Byways"), creates an immediate Spanish atmosphere with the sound of the castanets. The whole town is out in the streets on a warm summer evening. People are walking, talking, singing, and dancing. The clarinets play a dance tune marked by the composer as "elegant and rhythmic" and harmonized with parallel chords, one of Debussy's recurrent techniques. Later, an equally cheerful second theme is heard in the horns and clarinets, soon combined with a third melody which, in contrast, is more lyrical and expressive in character. The first theme with the castanet accompaniment finally returns (now played by the oboes instead of the clarinets). At last, the noisy parade is over; the people go home and the movement ends *pianissimo*.

The second section is called *Les parfums de la nuit* ("The Fragrances of the Night"). Falla perceived in Debussy's music "*the intoxicating spell of Andalusian nights*" — and Falla would know, since he was born in that province of Spain. Several factors contribute to the magic of this movement. First, Debussy's virtuosic orchestration makes a sophisticated use of divided strings (at one point, the first violins are split into seven different groups, all playing with special techniques such as *glissandos* and harmonics). The celesta part is every bit as "celestial"

as the instrument's name. The chords are again "parallel," with every part moving by the same interval regardless of keys. As a result, we get what is often called the "whole-tone scale" (C, D, E, F-sharp, G-sharp, A-sharp), in which each of the six steps is a whole step higher than the preceding one (with no half-steps). This scale is incompatible with the traditional Western major-minor system. Because its degrees are equidistant, they are all equally important, and any note may serve as a temporary or permanent resting-point. This gives the music a sense of hovering in the air, never touching the ground or reaching a clear closure.

The third movement of *Ibéria*, called *Le matin d'un jour de fête* ("The Morning of a Festival Day") follows upon the night without interruption. As the day begins to break, we hear the distant sound of a drum along with some soft string pizzicatos. The night music returns for a moment in the form of a three-measure flute solo. The violins and violas imitate the sound of guitars — Debussy's score even instructs half the players to hold their instruments like guitars. The clarinets play their solo "very cheerfully, exaggerating the accents." The violin solo, full of double stops, must be "free and whimsical" (*libre et fantasque*); the oboe and english horn parts are marked "merry and whimsical" (*gai et fantasque*).

According to correspondence with his publisher, Debussy had some difficulty choosing from three different ways of ending the piece. "Shall I toss up between them," Debussy wrote, "or try to find a fourth solution?" He finally opted for a big crescendo, "brisk and vigorous" (*vif et nerveux*); the last word belongs to the trombones, which cap the piece with a stupendous three-part *glissando*.

—PETER LAKI

At a Glance

Debussy composed his three Images for orchestra between 1905 and 1912. Ibéria was completed late in 1908 and Rondes de printemps in the following year. Giggles was not completed until 1912. Ibéria was premiered on February 20, 1910, with Gabriel Pierné conducting. The first American performance of Ibéria was given by Gustav Mahler and the New York Philharmonic on January 3, 1911.

Ibéria runs about 20 minutes in performance. Debussy scored it for piccolo, 3 flutes (third doubling second piccolo), 2 oboes, english horn, 3 clarinets, 3 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (tambourine, side drum, castanets, xylophone, 3 bells), celesta, 2 harps, and strings.

Ibéria was introduced to The Cleveland Orchestra's repertoire by Nikolai Sokoloff in January 1920. The Orchestra played it most recently during the 2007-08 season, with performances led by music director Franz Welser-Möst in Cleveland, in Florida, and across Europe.

The Cleveland Orchestra and Pierre Boulez have recorded Debussy's complete Images twice, in 1967 and in 1991 (both performances won Grammy Awards).