



أوركسترا قطر الفيلهارمونية  
Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra

عضو في مؤسسة قطر  
Member of Qatar Foundation

**HAPPY NEW YEAR  
WITH SCHEHERAZADE**

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# Programme

## Happy New Year with Scheherazade

Katara Cultural Village Opera House  
Saturday, January 21, 2023  
7:30 pm

Karl-Heinz Steffens, conductor  
Joo Young Oh, violin  
Taoufik Mirkhan, qanoun  
Rania Shehab, narrator

**Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov:  
(1844- 1908)**

**Scheherazade Symphonic Suite, Op. 35**

- I. The Sea and Sinbad's Ship
- II. The Story of the Kalendar Prince
- III. The Young Prince and The Young Princess
- IV. Festival at Baghdad. The Sea. The Ship Breaks against a Cliff Surmounted by a Bronze Horseman

**Intermission**

**Franz von Suppé:  
(1819-1895)**

**Overture to Leichte Kavallerie (Light Cavalry)**

**Johann Strauss, Jr.:**

**Rosen aus dem Süden (Roses from the South), Op. 388**

**Johann Strauss, Jr.:**

**Overture to Der Zigeunerbaron (The Gypsy Baron)**

**Johann Strauss, Jr.:**

**Pizzicato Polka**

**Émile Waldteufel:  
(1837-1915)**

**Estudiantina**

**Johann Strauss, Jr.:**

**Egyptischer Marsch (Egyptian March), Op. 335**

**Johann Strauss, Jr.:**

**Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka, Op. 214**

**Johann Strauss, Jr.:**

**Unter Donner und Blitz Polka  
(Thunder and Lightning Polka), Op. 324**

Out of respect for the musicians and fellow audience members please silence your mobile phones. Applause between movements is not customary. Please also refrain from flash photography. Seating begins 30 minutes before performances. Latecomers cannot be seated during the concert. Children 6 and over are welcome at Philharmonic concerts. The Philharmonic retains the right to expel anyone disturbing other. Food and beverages can be consumed in the lobby only.

# Composers and Programme Notes



## Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov

Born to an aristocratic Russian family in Tikhvin—East of Saint Petersburg—Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov was obliged to join the Imperial Russian Navy when he was twelve. Musically gifted, the young Nikolai studied the piano and composition secretly. He developed a love for music fostered by visits to the opera and orchestral concerts. Introduced to Mily Balakirev at age 18 and then to César Cui and Modest Mussorgsky—all three known as composers despite only being in their 20s—Rimsky-Korsakov was encouraged by Balakirev to compose. He utilized his naval missions to discover the world, to enrich himself in music, history and literature, and to compose his first works that he sent from his distant travels to his friends of The Five (a group of five Russian Nationalist composers). At age 27, he accepted a professorship position at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory—Alexandre Glazounov, Anatoli Liadov, Anton Arensky, Sergei Prokofiev and Igor Stravinsky were his students—and in 1873, he was attached to the Imperial Navy. Teaching composition and orchestration obliged Rimsky-Korsakov to deepen his theoretical musical knowledge, an influence criticized by The Five. However, the composer's redemption laid in a project he undertook: the collection of old popular Russian songs. The discovery of old peasant rites was going to inhabit his later opera works. In 1881, he composed his opera *Snegourochka*—or *The Snow Maiden*, from which the *Dance of the Tumblers* is extracted—with an unexpected easiness.

In 1886, Rimsky-Korsakov organised a series of Russian symphonic concerts, conducting most of them. It is for these concerts that he wrote his most brilliant compositions: *Sheherazade*, the *Capriccio espagnol*, *The Russian Easter Festival Overture*. Turning his back to academic contrapuntal influences, his music took the turn of the figurative development and the bright orchestration which became his stamp. Affected by Tchaikovsky's death in 1893, Rimsky-Korsakov wrote eleven operas for the Imperial Theatre between 1893 and 1908. The last one, *The Golden Cockerel*, was created in 1909, after the composer's death. Shortly after it, Igor Stravinsky composed his *Pogreb'al'naya Pesnya (Funeral Song)* in memory of his teacher, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.

Rimsky-Korsakov left an oeuvre that includes operas, chamber works and songs, and which is most appreciated for its fantastic themes and its inspiration sprung from popular folklore. Rimski-Korsakov was a storyteller and a painter. His operas are masterful musical evocations of myths and legends. Excerpts and suites from them have proved as popular in the West as the purely orchestral works. The best-known of these excerpts is probably the *Flight of the Bumblebee* from *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*, which has often been heard by itself in orchestral programmes, and in countless arrangements and transcriptions, most famously in a piano version made by Sergei Rachmaninoff. Rimsky-Korsakov's best known symphonic works are the popular symphonic suite *Scheherazade* as well as the *Capriccio Espagnol* and the *Russian Easter Festival Overture*. They stand out for their originality, their evocative power allied to rich tone-colouring and brilliant orchestration. Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov counts today as a prodigious composer who allowed the Russian soul to express itself in its full authenticity. The influence of his orchestration is visible in the works of composers such as Maurice Ravel, Claude-Achille Debussy, Paul Dukas and Ottorino Respighi.

## Scheherazade Symphonic suite, Op. 35

The *One Thousand and One Nights*—also known as *The Arabian Nights*—is a collection of folk tales and stories gathered in Arabic during the Islamic Golden Age. The stories are narrated by Scheherazade, who weaves her stories over one thousand and one nights to her husband, the Sultan Shahryar, to save herself from execution in the morning. As for the origin of the stories, most come from the ancient and medieval Middle-East and Middle and Southern-Asia. As an orientalist interested by East and West-Asian cultures, Rimsky-Korsakov came to be enticed by the Scheherazadian weft. His inspiration took the form of a four-part symphonic suite. Its music was written to produce the sensation of fantastic narratives from the Orient, and although it did not use Arabic melodies like Rimsky-Korsakov's previous works *Antar*, it bares the composer's own ideas of an oriental flavour.

Two principal themes start the work, drawing the portraits of its two main characters: the Sultan, depicted with a heavy brass motif, and Scheherazade, the storyteller, painted in a sinuous solo violin theme with a light harp accompaniment. The fine metallic timbre of the violin at its high range creates an exotic feel that haunts the heroine's leitmotif. Both themes—they will undergo expressive transformations over the course of the suite—recede, making room to a swelling string melody in barcarole time, rendering the sea and Sinbad's sailing ship. Rich in melodic content, the movement carries its musical figures past waves and islands to a final sunset over a calm sea scenery painted in wind chords and pizzicati.

The violin theme returns in the second movement to wave a new story of Scheherazade's, that of the Kalendar Prince who disguises himself as a beggar in search for wisdom. His theme appears first in solo woodwinds (the bassoon followed by the oboe), sad and meditative. Joined by the strings, the prince's journey speeds up with the entire orchestra's support. A solo clarinet recalls the prince's theme, intertwining with a fanfare march-like-motif played by trombone and muted trumpet.

The *Young Prince and The Young Princess* is a peaceful movement, simple in form and in content. The prince's theme is played by languorous strings and the princess' by a tender flute. Only a few swift and virtuoso clarinet and flute scales dare to disturb the reigning tenderness. A violin cadenza on the storyteller theme brings the listener back to the initial mood.

The final movement brings back several previous themes. To calm the angry sultan, Scheherazade describes the Festival at Baghdad. The profusion of melodies and the decreasing orchestral accompaniment suggest an attempt to guide the sultan into sleep. The sea theme returns, but the music grows massively to a thunderous climax. A reiteration of the fanfare motif portrays the shipwreck. The main characters' two themes intermingle, and Scheherazade concludes the work peacefully.



## Franz von Suppé

Author Franz von Suppé was a leading composer of Austrian operatic art in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. He enjoyed a success comparable to that of the French author Jacques Offenbach.

Perhaps the lineage to which Franz von Suppé belongs can be contributed to his emergence as a promising composer in theatrical works. He had an indirect family relationship with the brilliant Italian opera composer Gaetano Donizetti, who had an active role in the education and training of von Suppé when his talent in musical composition first emerged.

## Overture to *Leichte Kavallerie* (Light Cavalry)

Hungary's place in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and although it remained second only to Austria, was increasingly important, and the people of Vienna were enchanted by this out-of-the-ordinary gypsy land. Theater writers have contributed to this interest in works that consistently show Hungary, and this preface by Franz von Suppé is one of them. One only has to listen to the opening to notice its distinctive qualities, its noble and suffused tone and the mixture of musical atmosphere used in it make it the perfect introduction to the story of the adventure of the Light Cavalry.

The opening begins with a solo fanfare on the trumpet, and from the outset is inspired by a tale of a military in the manner of Suppé and his own flair that alternates between loud and soft elements in a free mixture. This mixture forms a prelude to the second part of the opening, which contains a famous melody performed by brass instruments. This is followed by a clarinet solo that introduces the agonizing oriental Hungarian chord melody, created by Suppé using a structural strategy for the interaction of the music to increase by half a step, sprinting to the climax of the final smash at the end.



## Johann Strauss, Jr.

Also known as Johann Strauss II, Johann Baptist Strauss was an Austrian composer, son of Johann Strauss I and brother of the two less-known composers Josef and Eduard Strauss. Johann Strauss II left a wide repertoire of entertainment music—over 500 waltzes, polkas, quadrilles, and other types of dance music. He marked the musical history as the “Waltz King”.

After taking violin classes against his father’s will, Johann Baptist wrote his first waltz in 1831. In 1844, he formed a small 24 musician orchestra to perform at the Dommayers Casino in Hietzing. After this very successful debut (19 encore of the composer’s waltzes were requested), Johann Strauss’s career set out wildly to take him all around Europe and to the United States. After encountering Jacques Offenbach in 1860, Strauss created his famous operetta *Die Fledermaus* in 1874. In 1889, he composed his last work, the ballet *Cinderella*. His most famous works are the *Tritsch-Tratsch* Polka (1858), *On the Beautiful Blue Danube* (1867), *Tales from the Vienna Woods* (1868), *Der Karneval in Rom* (1873), *Die Fledermaus* (1874), *Der Zigeunerbaron* (1885) and the *Emperor Waltz* (1889).

## Roses from the South, Op. 388

*Roses from the South* is unequalled as a succession of grand orchestral textures with luxurious waltz melodies. A close look reveals a sophisticated construction, yet it’s hard to see past its utterly glorious moods. The concert nature of the writing is a far cry from the first pieces of Johann Strauss, Sr., which are instead patterned for dancing. It’s no wonder the piece is a staple of New Year’s concerts.

## Overture to Der Zigeunerbaron (The Gypsy Baron)

The *Gypsy Baron* was Strauss’ second most popular operetta, trailing only *Die Fledermaus* (The Bat). Like the overture to *Lehár’s The Land of Smiles*, this is a potpourri overture of all the wonderful melodies to come in the operetta. To spice the mix, Strauss draws on all the prototypical gypsy elements found in Franz Liszt’s *Hungarian Rhapsodies*: rhetorical exclamations, improvisational solo lines, the augmented second, dotted rhythms and finally an impossibly fast coda.

## Pizzicato Polka

The *Pizzicato Polka* is a piece of orchestral music by Johann Strauss II. Strauss composed it with his brother Josef in 1869 for a trip to Imperial Russia. It was published in 1870. The polka was written for string orchestra and glockenspiel. It was hugely popular, especially in Italy, where it was included on every program Strauss played there. The piece consists of four melodies and the work is arranged in ternary form (A-B-A).



## Émile Waldteufel

Waldteufel received his first music lessons from his father and local musician Joseph Heyberger. Once he moved to Paris, he was able to take classes from Laurent at the Conservatoire de Paris, followed by advanced studies under Marmontel. Among his fellow pupils was Jules Massenet.

At the age of 27, Waldteufel became the court pianist of pianist of Empress Eugénie. He also led the orchestra at state balls. His appointment by Napoléon III to the musical direction of the balls led him to participation in the events in Biarritz and Compiègne; at the latter he met many other musicians and artists and accompanied the emperor playing the violin.

Waldteufel gave concerts in several European cities including London in 1885, Berlin in 1889 (where he enjoyed a friendly rivalry with Johann Strauss), and the Paris Opéra Balls in 1890 and 1891. He continued his career as conductor and composer of dance music for the presidential balls until 1899 when he retired.

Waldteufel died at his home, 37 rue Saint-Georges in Paris, at the age of 77.

Waldteufel composed at and for the piano (often for performance at court) before orchestrating many of the works. He conducted with a stick rather than the then-customary violin bow.

The typical Waldteufel orchestra consisted of strings and a doubled woodwind section, two cornets, four horns, three trombones, and ophicleide or euphonium, along with percussion.

Waldteufel's music can be distinguished from Johann Strauss II's waltzes and polkas in that he used subtle harmonies and gentle phrases, unlike Strauss's more robust approach.

## Estudiantina

Estudiantina is a musical arrangement, made in 1883, by Émile Waldteufel. Its melody was composed earlier in 1881 by Paul Lacôme, with lyrics by Julien de Lau Lusignan.

Waldteufel first adapted it to a two-piano version, and later to an orchestral version with which classical music audiences are familiar today. The main melody is universally recognized by Americans of a certain age as the Rheingold jingle. In Germany the main melody is very popular because of a song called "Spaniens Gitarren" sung by the singers Cindy & Bert in 4/4 time which was a great hit for them in 1974.

The waltz does not have the extended introduction so often favoured by Waldteufel and begins instead with a brief fanfare which announces the waltz's 3/4 time. The refrain is in D major and is repeated twice.

The second section is in G major, with a quiet repetitive note melody followed by a midsection D major part. The third part of the arrangement is in D major, with a contrasting B minor part. The final section is back in G major, this time a quieter part than the previous sections, rounded up by an ebullient chorded phrase. The main introduction is played again, as is the refrain. After a brief reprise of the second section melody in a different key, the refrain is repeated again, and the waltz ends on a high-spirited note.

## Egyptischer Marsch (Egyptian March) Op. 335

This wonderfully energetic piece was written in 1869 to celebrate the future opening of the Suez Canal and was premiered in a summer concert by the composer's popular traveling orchestra in Pavlovsk, Russia, outside St. Petersburg, and then the location of Tsar Paul I's country residence.

It was first played in Vienna in December of that year as a processional march for Anton Bittner's burlesque entitled *Into Egypt*.

The piece opens quietly with low drums and a distant wind section playing an exotic minor-ish "Egyptian" introductory melody, with the lower strings tripping along scale wise in response. On a sudden fast crescendo, three heavily accented minor chords begin the melody with the full orchestra featuring the brasses. The mood is that of an aggressive military band. The next section recasts the tune in the brighter parallel major scale with one "Arabic" alteration of the melody (a flattening of the sixth step). The mood changes to that of a spirited military parade on a sunny day. A chorus is then added singing wordlessly and softly in a combination of the minor and major key melodies. The aggressive first theme then repeats with lower brass runs. This is followed by the introduction as the music slowly fades away into the distance with a repeated rhythmic figure.

## Tritsch-Tratsch Polka Op. 214

Johann Strauss wrote this polka (Op. 214) in 1858 as Johann Strauss' son was the first personality caricatured in the series "Viennese Personalities" in the satirical weekly journal "Humoristisch-satyrische Wochenschrift Tritsch-Tratsch" (Humorous-Satirical Journal Chitter-Chatter), second edition on March 7, 1858. Tritsch-Tratsch means chatter. This polka is a musical chatter of Viennese women at the market. The music polka comes from Czechia, polka means half-step and became popular in Europe in 19th century. Written in 1858 after a successful tour of Russia where he performed in the summer concert season at Pavlovsk, Saint Petersburg. It was first performed in a concert in Vienna on 24 November 1858. Tritsch-Tratsch (chit-chat) refers to the Viennese passion for gossip.

Strauss may also have been referencing the burlesque *Der Tritschtratsch* [de] by the famous Austrian dramatist and actor Johann Nestroy, which premiered in 1833 and was still in the stage repertoire when the polka was written. The mood of the piece is jaunty and high-spirited, as were many of Strauss' polkas. Strauss composed the Tritsch-Tratsch-Polka, Op. 214 (1858) at a time when he regularly visited Russia, where he was exposed to compositional ideas that found their way into the popular Viennese forms of which he was the undisputed master. In this polka, Strauss retains the customary ternary form but tends to accent each beat equally. The A section itself consists of three parts, in turn configured in a miniature ternary scheme. Section B, containing only two melodies, is likewise rounded by a return of its first tune. Following B, the A section returns in its entirety, and the work closes with a brief coda.

## Unter Donner und Blitz (Thunder and Lightning Polka), op.324

Strauss composed this imaginative piece on the tunes of timpani and gongs. The audience remains vigilant, wondering what's next. Strauss delights the audience by changing the weights and emphasizing different rhythmic times



# *Karl-Heinz Steffens*

Conductor

Karl-Heinz Steffens is recognised as a conductor of distinction in both operatic and symphonic worlds and is in great demand as a guest. Recent seasons have seen him work with ensembles such as the Bavarian Radio Symphony, Berlin Philharmonic, Lyon National, Munich Philharmonic, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Salzburg Mozarteum and Zurich Tonhalle Orchestras and frequently with the Radio Symphony Orchestras of Berlin, Cologne, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Hannover, Leipzig and Stuttgart. This season he returns to Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, Filharmonica Teatro Regio Torino and continues his appearances in Scandinavia with the Helsinki Philharmonic and a Brahms symphony cycle with Norrköping Symphony Orchestra. He also makes his North American debut with the Toronto Symphony.

In the UK, Steffens returns to the Hallé, City of Birmingham Symphony and Bournemouth Symphony Orchestras and makes his debut with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra opening the Lammermuir festival with Bruckner's Symphony No. 7. Last season he concluded his cycle of Brahms works with the Philharmonia Orchestra conducting the Requiem and appearing as soloist in the composer's Clarinet Quintet. Under his leadership as Music Director of the Deutsche Staatsphilharmonie Rheinland-Pfalz, the orchestra was honoured with many accolades; they received the ECHO award for Best Orchestra in 2015 for their recording of works by B.A. Zimmermann and in 2016/17 were nominated prizewinners of the Best Concert Programme of the Season by the Deutsche Musikverlegerverband, the German Music Publishers' Association.

Most recently their recording of works by George Antheil, an addition to the Modern Times series, was designated Concert Recording of the Year by the new Opus Klassik awards. Equally at home in the opera house, Steffens gave the Norwegian premiere of Pelléas and Mélisande at the Norwegian National Opera where he has also conducted productions of *Così fan tutte*, *Fidelio* and Calixto Bieito's *Tosca*. He has appeared several times at the Teatro alla Scala leading performances of *Così fan tutte*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Götterdämmerung*, and recently made his Zürich Opera debut with *Così fan tutti*.

He is regularly invited to the Berlin Staatsoper Unter den Linden, where this season he conducts performances of *Fidelio*. Prior to his conducting career, Steffens was a highly respected solo clarinetist who also held several orchestral positions culminating in the successive posts of Principal Clarinet with the Bavarian Radio and the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestras.

# Upcoming Concerts

## FRANK SINATRA AND FRIENDS

Andreas S. Weiser, conductor  
Tom Gaebel, Frank Sinatra  
Jerry Lu, piano  
Stephan Ray, double bass  
Niklas Walter, drum  
Jan Schneider, trumpet  
Marcus Bartelt, saxophone

In a toe tapping evening celebrating Ol' Blue Eyes and others from the big band and swing era, Tom Gaebel takes on Frank Sinatra's greatest hits backed by special musical guests and the incredible Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra.

|                          |                                |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Jim Croce:</b>        | Bad, Bad Leroy Brown           |
| <b>Cole Porter:</b>      | I've Got You Under My Skin     |
| <b>Unknown:</b>          | Happy Birthday, Ol' Blues Eyes |
| <b>Jimmy Van Heusen:</b> | Love and Marriage              |
| <b>Carson Parks:</b>     | Something Stupid               |
| <b>Frank Sinatra:</b>    | Meet the Rat Pack              |
| <b>Cole Porter:</b>      | I Get Kick Out Of You          |
| <b>Jerome Kern:</b>      | Ol' Man River "Show Boat"      |
| <b>Kurt Weill:</b>       | Mack the Knife                 |
| <b>Bart Howard:</b>      | Fly Me To The Moon             |
| <b>Unknown:</b>          | Bossa Nova Medley              |
| <b>Eddie Snyder:</b>     | Strangers In The Night         |
| <b>Agustín Lara:</b>     | Granada                        |
| <b>Ervin Drake:</b>      | It Was A Very Good Year        |
| <b>Dean Kay:</b>         | That's Life                    |
| <b>John Kander:</b>      | New York, New York             |

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# Musicians



LIONEL SCHMIT



JOO YOUNG OH



VITALII PERVUSHYN



TOBIAS GETTE



MICHAELA LINSBAUER



TAEHYUN KIM



ANNEMARI AINOMAE



DMITRI TORCHINSKY



DINA LEINI



PAVLO DOVHAN



MARIYA MEDVEDEVA



RURIKO YAMAMOTO



MAIAS ALYAMANI



REEM KHOURY



GEORGES YAMINE



ISLAM EL HEFNAWY



SHAZA OWEDA



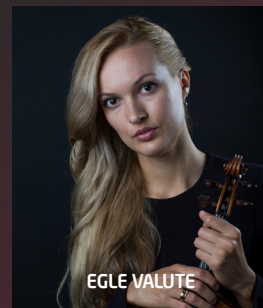
JULIA KORODI



ANNE-CATHRIN EHRlich



MOHAMED OWEDA



EGL E VALUTE



GIOVANNI PASINI



ANCA BOLD



ANDREA MEREUTA



VICTOR SUMENKOV



MERVE BULUN



INSE WEIN



ISLAM ABDELAZIZ



ANTON PAVLOVSKY



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# Musicians



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