



Gabriel Fauré - Pavane in F sharp minor op. 50

“All that I have been able to compose anew during this existence spent commuting by train is certainly an accurate *Pavane*, but not particularly important”. Thus, in an 1877 letter addressed to a friend, Gabriel Fauré described that short page that would make him famous. Initially composed for orchestra alone, the *Pavane* in F sharp minor op. 50 was also declined in a version for choir and orchestra, the guise in which it was presented for the first time in concert on April 28, 1888 in Paris, and later also in a version for piano. As suggested by the title, the *Pavane* is inspired by an ancient court dance widespread in Europe since the end of the 16th century characterized by a slow movement and even rhythm. In Fauré's imagination, the memory of a now lost time finds confirmation in the character of vague melancholy that distinguishes this page with its soft colors and refined workmanship.

Camille Saint-Saëns - Concert No. 1 in A minor Op. 33 for cello and orchestra

Made between 1872 and 1873, the Concerto n. 1 in A minor for cello and orchestra op. 33 is among Camille Saint-Saëns' most original instrumental works. Characterized by a structure in a single large symphonic movement within which three movements can be found that follow each other without pauses, the concert, on the one hand, respects the forms of the classical tradition and on the other, marries the concept of creative freedom guaranteed by cyclical form. Although each movement is autonomous (the first in sonata form, the second in the form of a minuet with trio and the third in the form of a Lied), all three are connected by harmonic affinities and thematic references that underline their organic nature. The writing is influenced by the theatrical style, deliberately exhibited here. The cello is in fact often engaged in emphatic gestures and passages that highlight the expressive and timbral potential of the instrument, treated in the guise of a singing soloist.

Claude Debussy - From Images, “Ibéria”

After the first two series of Images for piano, Debussy created a third for the orchestra. Composed in different eras, from 1905 to 1912, the three orchestral *Images* (*Gigues - Ibéria - Rondes de printemps*) share a folkloric inspiration and a dancing character. Of the three, *Ibéria* is undoubtedly the best known and most performed. Despite having never visited Spain, Debussy still managed to restore its sunny image with extreme naturalness. In the three sections of the score, *Par les rues et par les chemins - Les parfums de la nuit - Le matin d'un jour de fête*, Iberian folklore comes to life through a very colorful instrumentation, languid melodies and motifs with a popular flavor supported by a vital and overwhelming rhythm.

Maurice Ravel - Boléro

Ravel's well-known *Boléro* was born at the request of the dancer Ida Rubinstein, who in 1927 commissioned the composer friend a score for a short ballet with a Spanish setting. The first performance took place the following year, but already two years later, with the performance in concert form conducted by the author himself on January 11, 1930, the *Boléro* went beyond the confines of dance to establish itself as one of the symbolic works of orchestral literature of all times. “There are no contrasts and practically no invention, except for the initial project and the way to put it into practice,” Ravel explained about his work. The elements used by the author are therefore few and simple: the rhythm of an ancient Spanish dance of the eighteenth century, the bolero, characterized by a ternary rhythm punctuated by the percussions and a moderate pace, and a perturbing melody with an Arabic-Spanish flavor, removed from the development but repeated obsessively until saturation. The basic idea is that of a gradual and highly calibrated dynamic and timbral crescendo which sees a new instrument entering the field with each repetition of the theme, which enriches Ravel's palette of colours. First the solo flute accompanied by the pulsation of the drum, then gradually all the other instruments of the various orchestral families, which by overlapping create an ever greater sound depth and a melodic and rhythmic tension that explodes in the final bars.