



The Exquisite Enigma of Maurice Ravel: Polished Perfection, Hidden Genius

Dr. Rachel Franklin

Wednesday, July 16 & 23, 2025 - 12:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. ET

Polished Perfection, Hidden Genius: The Exquisite Enigma of Maurice Ravel

"Music should be the beautiful, fragile wing of the soul. It should enchant, caress, and disturb." Maurice Ravel, 1875-1937

The music of Ravel brings a very unique form of magnetism, delicacy, passion and a frisson of disquiet to our concert experience. Beneath his shimmering sound canvases lies an extraordinary craft and fanatical precision that underpins every silken phrase and melody. Concert pianist and speaker Dr. Rachel Franklin celebrates his 150th birthday by exploring a wide range of his works from such greatly loved masterpieces as *Daphnis et Chloé* and *La Valse*, to solo display works like *Tzigane* that dazzle with their beauty and technical brilliance.

Week 1, July 16th: "I am neither a romantic nor a classic; I am myself."

In the years before World War 1, Ravel carved out a highly distinctive path for himself as a young innovator, creating ravishing sonic worlds that both seduced and confused his listeners. Selections include his ballet *Daphnis et Chloé*, piano works *Jeux d'Eau* and *Gaspard de la Nuit*, and his string quartet in F. We close with the spine-chilling *La Valse*.

Works explored, media used:

Pavane pour une Infante défunte, 1899

Jeux d'Eau, 1901

- George Cziffra
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LIZRDOUQrME>

String quartet, 1903

- Quatuor Ébène
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3PBc90s-XQA>

Introduction et allegro pour harpe, flûte, clarinette et quatuor à cordes, 1905

- Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields Chamber Ensemble
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bBm1w8J63mg>

Cinq Mélodies populaires grecques, 1906

- Victor Sicard, Anna Cardona
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zZrJBbUf6t0>

Rapsodie espagnole, 1908

- Les Siècles orchestra, Adrien Perruchon - conductor
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxQpXok0RFw&t=624s>

Gaspard de la Nuit, 1908, poems by Aloysius Bertrand

- "Le Gibet" - Martha Argerich
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3-kW_hqLGY
- "Scarbo" - Gina Bachauer. Reading by John Gielgud

"Ma mère l'oye" (Mother Goose), 1910, 1911

- Martha Argerich & Lang Lang
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JEC_XGjgluo

Deux mélodies hébraïques, 1914

- Jessye Norman, Dalton Baldwin
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sapbUtVAvRI>

Daphnis et Chloé, 1912

- Opéra national de Paris, choreographer - Benjamin Millepied
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4p4ZasfcS-M>

Trio, 1914

- Janine Jansen, Torleif Thedéen, Denis Kozhukhin
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CKAwByyYoCw>

La Valse, 1914-1919

- Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Pablo Heras-Casado - conductor
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIMJ6Ri-LMM>