



# FRENCH CONNECTIONS

The Quincy Symphony Orchestra will present the FRENCH CONNECTIONS Concert as the finale to its WINDOWS ON THE WORLD 61<sup>st</sup> concert season on Sunday, April 19 at 3:00 PM in the QJHS Morrison Theater. The concert will feature beautiful works by French composers, followed by George Gershwin's dazzling *An American in Paris*. Dr. R. Joseph Dieker, clarinet, will be the guest soloist for this French theme concert.

The program will open with the flamboyant *Marche Militaire Française*, by Camille Saint-Saëns. Composed in 1880, *Marche Militaire Française* speaks not only of Saint-Saëns' patriotic pride but also of the colonial domination that France had held in Algeria for many decades. Next on the program will be Gabriel Faure's *Pelleas et Melisande* which premiered in 1898. Maeterlinck's Symbolist play, *Pelleas et Melisande*, became the inspiration for a number of composers including Faure, Debussy, Sibelius and Schoenberg. The QSO will perform a suite of works extracted from incidental music composed by Faure for the play. The Symbolists movement of the late 19th century focused on the evocation of moods rather than the literal description of images. The play's shadowy, mythical moods were more important than the plot and description of the plays characters. Faure's compositional style is focused on purity of line and colorful orchestration.

The featured soloist for the concert will be Dr. R. Joseph Dieker performing Claude Debussy's *Premiere Rhapsodie* for clarinet and orchestra. The *Rhapsodie* is a most difficult work, as Debussy was writing in his fine late melodic and harmonic style, making special demands of fingering and tone. Debussy composed the work in 1909 for a competition at the Paris Conservatoire, just at the moment when he was embarking upon his first book of Preludes for the piano. Since the work was designed for a competition, Debussy provided a fair number of challenges for the soloist, but never at the expense of musical interest. At one moment the music is full of rhythmic energy and the next it is gently fluent and serene. These quieter passages call for very delicate phrasing and an exceptionally beautiful tone.

Dieker has achieved success as a clarinetist, conductor, teacher, and administrator. He is currently vice president for academic affairs, dean of the college, and professor of music at Culver-Stockton College. In addition, he performs as principal clarinetist of the Quincy Symphony Orchestra. He has performed concertos with the Portland Chamber Orchestra, Oregon Sinfonietta, Truman State University Wind Symphony, and the Northwest Missouri State University Wind Symphony. This performance marks the third time that Dieker has appeared in a major concerto performance with the Quincy Symphony Orchestra. In 1998 he was featured in a performance of Aaron Copland's *Clarinet Concerto* and in 2004 performed Carl Maria von Weber's *Concertino* with the QSO.

The \$1,000 Grand Prize Drawing for the 4th Annual QSOA Raffle will be held at the conclusion of the intermission. Raffle proceeds will support the many programs of the QSOA, including concerts of the orchestra, chorus, youth orchestra, and youth chorus, as well as the in-

school symphony concerts for over 3500 3<sup>rd</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders. The grand prize of \$1,000 cash, 2<sup>nd</sup> prize of four QSOA season tickets, and 3<sup>rd</sup> prize of two QSOA season tickets will be awarded. Raffle tickets are currently on sale for \$10 each or 12/\$100, and may be purchased at the concert, in advance from any orchestra, chorus, Encore! or Symphony Board member, or by calling 217-222-2856 or visiting the website at [www.qsoa.org](http://www.qsoa.org).

Following the intermission, the orchestra will perform *Trois Nocturnes* by Claude Debussy, published in 1930. According to Debussy, the opening movement *Nuages (Clouds)* "renders the immutable aspect of the sky and the slow, solemn motion of the clouds, fading away in gray tones lightly tinged with white." The second movement, *Fêtes (Festivals)*, "gives us the vibrating atmosphere with sudden flashes of light. There is also the episode of the procession (a dazzling fantastic vision) which passes through the festive scene and becomes merged in it. But the background remains persistently the same: the festival, with its blending of music and luminous dust, participating in the cosmic rhythms." The women of the Quincy Symphony Chorus and the Quincy University Concert Choir will join the QSO for the third movement, *Sirènes (Sirens or Mermaids)*, which "depicts the sea and its countless rhythms, where presently, amongst the waves silvered by the moonlight, is heard the mysterious song of the Sirens as they laugh and pass on."

The final work on the concert will be George Gershwin's *An American in Paris*. With his reputation in the American musical world already established, George Gershwin went to Europe in 1928 for a vacation. His main destination was Paris, where he had aspirations of studying with the famous French composer, Maurice Ravel. The sights of Paris made a lasting impression on Gershwin. His experiences resulted in the symphonic poem, *An American in Paris*. In writing this work Gershwin's aim was twofold; first he wanted to interpret the effervescence and gaiety of Paris, and then he wanted to suggest an American's nostalgia for his own country as he strolls along the Parisian boulevards.

The Board and musicians of the Quincy Symphony Orchestra would like to invite you to participate in the Orchestras Feeding America National Food Drive, a national effort organized by the League of American Orchestras and inspired by the soon to be released movie, *The Soloist*. Non-perishable food items will be collected at the concert for donation to local food pantries.

Concert tickets will be available at the door or may be purchased in advance from the Symphony Office at 428 Maine, or from Wild Birds Unlimited, 3502 Broadway Rd. The cost is \$15 for adults and \$12 for seniors. Children 18 and under are admitted free to all QSO concerts, and are encouraged to attend. The program is partially supported by Gardner Denver, WGEM, and by the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency. Call 217-222-2856 or visit [www.qsoa.org](http://www.qsoa.org) for more information.