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SAKARI ORAMO CHIEF CONDUCTOR

FRIDAY 17 FEBRUARY, 2023

7.30pm, BARBICAN HALL

MAGNUS LINDBERG Serenades *UK premiere* 15'

SERGEY RACHMANINOV Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini 24'

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

GALINA USTVOLSKAYA Symphony No. 1 30'

IGOR STRAVINSKY Petrushka (1947 version) 31'

Denis Kozhukhin piano

Members of Trinity Boys Choir:

Oliver Barlow treble

Arlo Murray treble

Hannu Lintu conductor

RADIO 3 SOUNDS

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Tonight the BBC Symphony Orchestra is directed by Finnish conductor Hannu Lintu in a trio of Russian works, prefaced by the UK premiere of a new piece by his compatriot, Magnus Lindberg.

The title of Lindberg's *Serenades* may suggest something pastoral and idyllic, but this is a rugged score of elemental power, yet also one that allows fleeting glimpses of the lyricism that has begun to surface in his recent music. Galina Ustvolskaya composed her First Symphony in 1955, but it wasn't performed until over a decade later. Two trebles intone texts that address the injustices of Western life from a socialist perspective, all set in Ustvolskaya's uncompromisingly personal musical language.

Coupled with these works are two of the greatest monuments of Russian music. Rachmaninov's irresistible *Rhapsody* combines Paganini's most famous melody with the sounds of bells and the ominous *Dies irae* chant – Denis Kozhukhin is the soloist in this brilliant, virtuosic work. And to close, the vivid colours of Stravinsky's ballet *Petrushka*, relating the tale of the fatal loves and jealousies of three puppets, set against the bustling background of a St Petersburg Shrovetide fair.

MAGNUS LINDBERG

(born 1958)

Serenades (2020)

UK premiere

Magnus Lindberg's *Serenades* has its origins in a 2020 co-commission from the Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association, Radio France and the Munich Philharmonic Orchestra, initially arising from a suggestion made to Lindberg from Cristina Rocca, Vice President of the CSO. It was intended for performance that same year but fell victim to the pandemic and was finally premiered on 2 December 2021, with the CSO conducted by Lindberg's friend and fellow Finn, Hannu Lintu. Lindberg himself supplied a brief programme note for that first performance:

Much of the music I write is often fast and quite explosive – 'slow music' was never really my tonality, so to speak. So when I was asked to write a serenade, I began with a musical idea that deep down has a slow-moving feeling, but then takes off in many contrasting directions, with big cuts and quick shifts. Even so, the music conveys a sort of night-time quality. Ever since I wrote *Ottoni* for the Chicago Symphony's brass section in 2005, I have very much wanted to write music for this extraordinary orchestra again. With this commission before me, I knew I had to write more than just slow music – I wanted to write music that features the orchestra's shimmering virtuosity. So in the end the serenade I composed is a wild one.

As Lindberg suggests, anyone expecting the serenity of a Mozart wind serenade or the bonhomie of the two Brahms works is going to be surprised – but the wildness to which he points should perhaps be understood in the context of the serenade tradition: *Serenades* has its moments of lusty vigour, certainly, but it also has islands of enchanted calm with some of the most delicate orchestral writing Lindberg has ever produced. The work might best be approached as a marriage of two other traditions – the musical nightscape suggested by the title (think of the *Nachtstücke* in Mahler's Seventh Symphony, for example) and the nature-painting encountered so often in the music of Nordic composers.

...

Serenades emerges from silence, with descending string figurations and heraldic brass setting out the scale of Lindberg's conception, but the sound of the harp soon brings calm – a role it fulfils at several points in the work. Again and again, grand gestures in the brass settle into uneasy peace, soothed by woodwinds and strings, rather as the grand and shifting shadows of a nocturnal walk in the woods prove less dangerous on closer inspection. Two-thirds of the way through this quarter-hour piece, an overtly Sibelian passage of punchy pizzicatos in cellos and basses unleashes the most forceful climax yet – but it leads to a section of Hollywood sweetness from strings and harp. Hunting horns in the distance

stimulate an expansive arch of sound, yet this too sinks away into Romantic harmonies and *Serenades* relaxes back into the silence from which it started.

Programme note © Martin Anderson

Martin Anderson writes on music – often on Nordic and Baltic composers – for a number of publications including *Musical Opinion* in the UK, *Fanfare* in the USA and *Finnish Music Quarterly*. He also publishes books on music as Toccata Press and releases recordings of unfamiliar music as Toccata Classics.

MAGNUS LINDBERG

Over the past four decades Magnus Lindberg's position as one of the most widely heard of all contemporary composers has been reinforced by performance after performance; he is certainly the most popular Finnish composer since Sibelius. That achievement is all the more telling when you consider that he made his mark with large-scale orchestral scores of considerable complexity.

The piece that first put Lindberg's name before a wider international public was his huge, half-hour-long *Kraft*, for a *concertante* group of seven soloists and orchestra: in 1986 it won both the music prize of the Nordic Cultural Council and an award from the UNESCO Rostrum of Composers. But the very Expressionist zeal that brought *Kraft* such attention gave Lindberg himself pause for thought, and he spent some time reconsidering his musical means. Why, he wondered,

had modern music turned its back on the directional strength supplied by classical harmony?

The result was a new inclusiveness in his style, and the works he has composed since that Damascene moment have combined modernist colour and Classical symphonic strength in a musical language of ever-increasing resourcefulness and approachability. The sheer physical impact of Lindberg's major orchestral scores accounts for some degree of their immediate appeal but there's often another factor involved, something rare in contemporary music – a sense of fun.

The architecturally informed harmonic thinking in Lindberg's new outlook was deployed at full strength in what is probably his most important work to date, the deeply moving *Aura* (*in memoriam Witold Lutosławski*), composed in 1993–4. Lindberg describes the piece as a concerto for orchestra; but with four movements, and at 40 minutes long, it is a symphony in all but name, possessing a profundity and power that justify its place downstream from Beethoven, Brahms, Mahler, Sibelius and the other masters of symphonic form.

Works since *Aura* have underlined Lindberg's own mastery, not least thanks to two composing residencies. The New York Philharmonic commissioned *EXPO* (2009), the expansive tone-poem *Al largo* (2009–10) and a Second Piano Concerto (2011–12); the orchestra also premiered the 'concert opener' *Vivo* (in which

Lindberg confesses a debt to Ravel) in 2015. And the London Philharmonic, with which Lindberg held a residency from 2014 to 2017, topped and tailed 2015 with two major works: *Accused*, ‘three interrogations’ for soprano and orchestra, in January and the Second Violin Concerto in December.

Elsewhere, the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam premiered *Era* in January 2013 and *Avanti!*, the Finnish chamber orchestra with which Lindberg has been associated since its formation, gave *Aventures* its first hearing later that same year, just before two old friends of the composer, cellist Anssi Karttunen and conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen, launched the Second Cello Concerto in Los Angeles.

More recent works include the brief *Agile* for symphony orchestra, premiered by Sir Simon Rattle and the Berlin Philharmonic in June 2018, shortly before Lindberg’s 60th birthday. Another milestone lay behind *Tempus fugit* of 2016–17, commissioned by the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra to mark the centenary of Finnish independence. Since then Lindberg has continued his engagement with the symphony orchestra, producing the Beethoven-inspired *Absence* and this evening’s *Serenades* in 2020, *Encore* in 2021 and, last year, a Third Piano Concerto, inspired by the pianism of Yuja Wang.

Profile © Martin Anderson



FRIDAY 24 FEBRUARY 7.30PM

Gemma New conducts American dreams and sonic fireworks

JOHN ADAMS The Chairman Dances

GEORGE GERSHWIN Piano Concerto
in F major

VALERIE COLEMAN Umoja (Anthem
of Unity) *UK premiere*

SAMUEL BARBER Symphony No. 1

Lise de la Salle piano
Gemma New conductor

America has many musical voices, and for her debut with the BBC SO Gemma New has conceived a concert that’s as diverse and generous as the American dream itself – ranging from the UK premiere of Valerie Coleman’s exuberant *Anthem of Unity* to 20th-century classics by Adams and Barber.

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SERGEY RACHMANINOV (1873–1943)

Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43 (1934)

Denis Kozhukhin piano

The *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* is one of only a handful of works that Rachmaninov completed in the 25 years after his emigration from Russia in 1917. The gruelling demands of his life as a concert pianist meant that composition could be undertaken only during the off-season, whether on holiday in France (*Variations on a Theme of Corelli*, 1931) or during a schedule break in America (*Symphonic Dances*, 1940) or, in the 1930s, while relaxing at his Villa Senar on the shores of Lake Lucerne, where he wrote the ‘Paganini’ Rhapsody (1934) and the Third Symphony (1935–6). Rachmaninov’s library at Senar still contains a copy of Paganini’s *24 Caprices* for solo violin, the last of which provided the Rhapsody’s theme.

Rachmaninov was by no means the first composer, nor the last, to spot its potential. Paganini’s Caprice is in itself a set of 11 variations on his own tune. Liszt transcribed the whole Caprice for piano, and Brahms used the theme alone as the basis for his *Variations on a Theme of Paganini* of 1862–3. It was also taken up by Witold Lutosławski for his *Variations on a Theme by Paganini* and by Andrew Lloyd Webber in his *Variations* for cello and rock band of 1977, familiar as the signature

tune of ITV’s (and now Sky Arts’) *South Bank Show*. Rachmaninov composed his Rhapsody during the summer of 1934, giving the first performance of it in Baltimore on 7 November the same year under Leopold Stokowski.

The harmonic and melodic simplicity of the Paganini tune, its symmetry and its rhythmic spark all combine to make it ideal for variation treatment. For a composer with such a fatalistic frame of mind as Rachmaninov, however, there was the added attraction of the romantic myth, rife during the 19th century, that Paganini had sold his soul to the Devil in exchange for the ability to play with such diabolical wizardry. The possibilities for more sombre undertows in such an ostensibly upbeat work as the ‘Paganini’ Rhapsody would have appealed to him no end. Throughout his creative life the *Dies irae* funeral chant had cast a spell over him, making overt appearances in *The Isle of the Dead* (1909) and the *Symphonic Dances* and occurring more surreptitiously, by harmonic or melodic implication, elsewhere. In the ‘Paganini’ Rhapsody the *Dies irae* is clearly heard in the seventh variation. It weaves its way into the texture of the Rhapsody from time to time, dramatically so in a tussle with the Paganini theme in Variation 24, to the extent that one might be forgiven for imagining some sort of scenario in the background. Nor would that be entirely fanciful, for there is a letter from Rachmaninov to the choreographer Mikhail Fokine of 29 August 1937

outlining just such a plot for a ballet that Fokine was planning to choreograph using the Rhapsody's music. It was Rachmaninov who proposed the idea of the Paganini legend, with the character of Paganini to be represented by his own perky tune, the Devil (or, as Rachmaninov says, 'nechistaya sila', evil spirit) by the *Dies irae*.

...

Be all that as it may, purely as a piece of music the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* amply testifies to the fact that Rachmaninov's eternal round of the concert halls of Europe and America had not dulled his creative impulse. The pianism bristles with the 'new sparkle' that one of his friends had detected in the 'Corelli' Variations of 1931. The orchestration is lucid and luminous, with colours sharply defined. And the structure of the piece is ingenious. While retaining the whimsical nature of a rhapsody, it has a beginning, a middle and an end, loosely in line with a three-movement piano concerto. Only after the first variation (for orchestra alone) is the theme announced on the violins, triggering variations of effervescence until the *Dies irae* darkens the tone in Variation 7. Rachmaninov, in his letter to Fokine, linked Variations 8, 9 and 10 to the 'evil spirit', with No. 11 being the 'transition to the realm of love' – the slow movement, as it were. Here at the work's lyrical core something miraculous happens, for, simply by turning the Paganini theme upside down in Variation 18, Rachmaninov had

one of his most glorious and heartfelt melodic inspirations. The 'finale' starts with Variation 19, and the remaining five are constructed so as to create a continuous crescendo sequence to the ominous restatement of the *Dies irae* in Variation 24. But the piano – and Paganini – have the last word.

Programme note © Geoffrey Norris

Geoffrey Norris's study of Rachmaninov (OUP) was last reprinted in 2001. He is on the editorial board of the new Collected Edition of Rachmaninov's works being prepared by Russian Music Publishing/Bärenreiter. From 2011 to 2022 he lectured at the Gnesin Music Academy in Moscow.

SERGEY RACHMANINOV

Born in the environs of Novgorod on 1 April 1873, Rachmaninov had piano lessons locally before entering the St Petersburg Conservatory. In 1885 he came under the wing of the celebrated teacher Nikolay Zverev in Moscow, while also studying counterpoint with Taneyev and harmony with Arensky. He graduated in piano from the Moscow Conservatory with highest honours in 1891, and in the following year excelled in his composition finals with his one-act opera *Aleko*, given its premiere at the Bolshoi Theatre in 1893 – an occasion on which Tchaikovsky, the most potent influence on Rachmaninov's early music, applauded heartily.

The disastrous 1897 premiere of the First Symphony, however, severely undermined his confidence. With composition at a low

ebb, Rachmaninov consulted Dr Nikolay Dahl, who had been experimenting with forms of hypnosis. This has led to wildly exotic speculation as to what his treatment involved, but it seems likely that Dahl, as a cultured man and skilled musician, simply had a series of morale-boosting conversations with the composer, the outcome being that ideas formed for Rachmaninov's Second Piano Concerto, the work that fully released his personal creative voice. The next two decades saw a steady stream of major scores, including the piano Preludes and *Études-tableaux*, the mature songs, the Second Symphony (1906–7) and Third Piano Concerto (1909), together with two more operas, *Francesca da Rimini* (1900, 1904–5) and *The Miserly Knight* (1903–5), and key choral works including the Edgar Allan Poe-inspired *The Bells* (1912–13) and the Russian Orthodox *All-Night Vigil* (1915).

Following the 1917 October Revolution, Rachmaninov and his family emigrated from Russia, settling at different times in the USA and Switzerland, where he concentrated more on his concert career than on composition. For the next 25 years he was lionised as one of the finest pianists the world has ever known. If later works such as the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* (1934), the Third Symphony (1935–6) and the *Symphonic Dances* (1940) have more recourse to incisive rhythms, clarity of texture and piquancy of orchestration than earlier ones, his entire *oeuvre* mines deep

seams of the Russian character, shot through as it is with a sense of fatalism and with a richness of language that can encompass intense brooding, vigorous energy and passionate sincerity of soul. Rachmaninov died at his home in Beverly Hills on 28 March 1943, shortly before his 70th birthday.

Profile © Geoffrey Norris

INTERVAL: 20 MINUTES

GALINA USTVOLSKAYA (1919–2006)

Symphony No. 1 (1955)

1 Part 1

2 Part 2: Ciccio – Merry-go-round – Saturday Night – The Boy from Modena – ‘We take your junk!’ – The Waiting Room – When the Factory Chimneys Die – Epilogue – The Sun

3 Part 3

Oliver Barlow treble

Arlo Murray treble

David Swinson music coach

Sergey Rybin Russian language coach

Surtitles by Damien Kennedy

Galina Ustvolskaya's music tends towards extremes. Contrasts of tempo, dissonance and especially maximal dynamics abound throughout her music, prompting one critic to label her 'the lady with the hammer'. She certainly found her own individual style, incorporating block-like shifting harmonies, clashing clusters of notes and a strong focus on repetitive percussion, as well as texts that emphasise an unorthodox spirituality. She considered her compositional technique to be 'completely new, individual and not amenable to theoretical analysis'.

Her chromatic and often aggressive music was not widely accepted in the Soviet Union until the mid-1960s, when state control over performances began to relax and a new level of experimentalism was

grudgingly accepted. While Soviet music may be well known for such control and intervention (with Shostakovich being the most famous case), the cultural climate after Stalin's death in 1953 shifted to allow increasingly greater degrees of musical experimentalism; and by the mid-1960s a burgeoning avant-garde had developed in Soviet music. While Ustvolskaya remained on the periphery of this younger group of composers, her music was increasingly celebrated in the new climate of experimentation and came to be celebrated in its own way.

Ustvolskaya's First Symphony was written in 1955 but premiered as late as 1966 then not published until 1972 – a measure of the delays for performance and publication that she endured throughout the majority of the Soviet era. The piece is scored for orchestra and two boy trebles. Ustvolskaya's distinctive approach to orchestration is evident throughout, with a Stravinsky-like emphasis on woodwinds and brass favoured over strings. The central movement sets eight poems by Gianni Rodari (1920–80), an Italian children's author and journalist for a communist newspaper. The texts criticise the injustices of life in the United States from a socialist perspective. Ustvolskaya would later try to distance herself from these texts, even claiming that they were not her choice, and writing that the work was about 'the West' in general, rather than the USA specifically. Whatever the motivation, her music goes about depicting the horrors covered in Rodari's texts.

The first movement opens with weaving chromatic lines in the woodwind that slowly immerse us in Ustvolskaya's musical language, where dissonance blends freely with textural innovations such as note clusters in the timpani. The singers enter in the second movement: Ustvolskaya takes a similar approach for all of the song-settings, alternating suspended chromatic chords with agitated and angst-ridden sections. In a musical sense, we hear the trauma recounted in the text restaged in its accompaniment. Rodari's texts in these eight songs criticise in turn: child abuse, Jim Crow segregation laws, poverty resulting from low pay, children rendered orphans after gun violence, homelessness and terminal illness, unemployment, factory closures and (in the final poem) industrial pollution that blots out the sun. The final movement frames this parade of nightmares with an instrumental conclusion pervaded by sighing gestures.

In the years following the symphony's premiere and publication, Ustvolskaya tried to disown it as an early work, and she only belatedly allowed it to be included in her publisher's list of her music. She annotated her original manuscript with the words 'stronger text needed!' and insisted that the piece's meaning was not exclusively defined by the poetry. She even claimed that she had included the boy treble parts for their timbral interest, rather than for the function of setting the texts. The Symphony's inclusion in her accepted list of mature works perhaps

acknowledges the unity of her musical language across her life, heard here in prototypical form, with more than a passing resemblance to Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments* and *Les noces*. The critic Frans C. Lemaire described Ustvolskaya as a 'priestess of negation': in her First Symphony, we hear Ustvolskaya condemn the abuse of children through stark textures and grim depictions that call into question the very function of the 'choral symphony' as a genre.

Programme note © Daniel Elphick

Daniel Elphick is a Lecturer in Musicology at Royal Holloway, University of London, and writes on Russian and Soviet music. His first book is *Music Behind the Iron Curtain* (CUP, 2019).

GALINA USTVOLSKAYA

A pupil of Shostakovich at the Leningrad Conservatory from 1937 to 1941 and (after a period of evacuation in Tashkent) again from 1944 to 1947, then a teacher at the Music College attached to the Conservatory until 1975, Galina Ustvolskaya was something of a myth in her own lifetime. Famously reclusive and independent, she refused to attach herself to any official or underground community in Russia's musical life, and her self-image was of one whose ascetic musical language owed nothing to anyone, least of all her teacher: 'There is no link whatsoever between my music and that of any other composer, living or dead.' She certainly cared little

about public performance, turned away commissions, disowned a number of her earlier compositions on the grounds that they had been written for money and, even after her music's breakthrough in the West in the mid-1980s, only once travelled abroad (to Amsterdam in 1995).

But there is another side to the story. Ustvol'skaya's early works, such as the Piano Concerto of 1946, were manifestly indebted to Shostakovich, and even her characteristically brutalist-minimalist mature style, from the late 1950s on, has its roots in the intransigent rhythms of Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* and in the note-clusters and sonoric experiments of Henry Cowell (who had brought them to Russia in the 1920s), Bartók and such luminaries of the Polish school as Penderecki and early Górecki.

Later in life she made statements – or endorsed those made by others – attacking Shostakovich's music and personality. But that was, at least in part, the consequence of a fraught personal relationship; he had twice proposed marriage and twice been rebuffed. In the early stages of that relationship Ustvol'skaya took up a theme from the aborted early version of Shostakovich's Ninth Symphony and elaborated on it in her Trio for Clarinet, Violin and Piano (1949), only for Shostakovich to reappropriate her version of it in his String Quartet No. 5 of 1952 and, near the end of his life, in his *Suite on Verses of Michelangelo Buonarroti*.

Adamant that her music was spiritual but not religious, Ustvol'skaya nevertheless composed several of her best-known works to religious texts or with religious titles. Her Second, Third, Fourth and Fifth Symphonies are entitled, respectively, 'True, Eternal Bliss', 'Jesus Messiah, Save Us!', 'Prayer' and 'Amen'. Their aphoristic exclamations are an integral part of her intense declamatory manner, which deploys extraordinary combinations of instruments in remorselessly battering textures for which the label 'sado-minimalist' might not be inappropriate.

Profile © David Fanning

David Fanning is a Professor of Music at the University of Manchester, the author of books on Nielsen, Shostakovich and Weinberg, and a critic for *Gramophone* and *The Daily Telegraph*.

IGOR STRAVINSKY

(1882–1971)

Petrushka (1910–11, rev. 1946)

1 The Shrovetide Fair

2 Petrushka's Cell

3 The Moor's Quarters

4 The Shrovetide Fair and Petrushka's Death

Petrushka was the second of the series of ballets (and other stage works) that Stravinsky wrote for the Paris seasons of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes; it had its first production at the Théâtre du Châtelet in June 1911. A year earlier, after the explosive success of his first ballet, *The Firebird*, he had toyed with a work about prehistoric sacrificial rites (which became *The Rite of Spring*). But he was then diverted by Ballets Russes politics away from this collaboration – which Diaghilev distrusted because he had had no hand in its conception – towards a new idea based on the Punch and Judy shows, as we would recognise them, at the old St Petersburg Shrovetide fairs.

Diaghilev had rowed, not for the last time, with his designer Alexandre Benois but wanted to use a collaboration with him to lure Stravinsky away from the sacrifice project. He accordingly seized on the music he found Stravinsky writing when he visited him in Lausanne in September 1910 and insisted that it form the basis of a new ballet. This music was a pair of concert pieces for piano with orchestra that the composer apparently told him were

meant to represent the antics of a puppet suddenly endowed with life and hurling abuse at the orchestra. Diaghilev knew about Benois's passion for the Shrovetide fairs and no doubt, with his acute political instinct, at once saw a way of bringing designer and composer together, mending fences with Benois and scotching the other project.

Over the next few months, Stravinsky and Benois devised a complex and innovative scenario to run alongside music which, in some cases, had already been composed. Stravinsky had already thought of much scattered detailing. But the essential structure – the sentimental drama of Petrushka's unrequited love for the puppet Ballerina and his eventual murder by the Moor, while all around the Shrovetide fair goes on its merry, unheeding way – was in most respects probably Benois's. Benois, though, had always wanted Petrushka to kill the Moor but Stravinsky insisted that Petrushka be the victim, and he eventually, after much agonised searching, found the extraordinary ending of the ballet only a month or so before the premiere.

Everything about the music was Stravinsky's. It was his idea to portray the old St Petersburg, with its heady mixture of rustic and urban smells, its mud and wet leather, its cabbage soup and concertinas, through a gaudy paste-up of folk tunes and popular songs, spectacularly orchestrated, with sparkling rhythms and a novel kind of layered texture in which the musical events – like the events of real

life – are sometimes superimposed in a haphazard way. Paris found the mixture irresistible and Benois himself always regarded *Petrushka* as the most brilliant product of the collaborative spirit that underlay the Ballets Russes enterprise.

Curiously enough, when the Russian critics heard the music in concert, they were irritated by its over-dependence (in their view) on cheap tunes which they, as Russians, knew well. They took the line that it could only really be appreciated in conjunction with the stage action. But this judgement, like many of its time and place, has long since gone the way of the judges. Above all, what they could not see was the use Stravinsky would subsequently make of the techniques of harmonic combination and rhythmic counterpoint, which he initially devised as a setting for the borrowed folk songs and street cries in *Petrushka*. The way he himself put it was that the work's success 'gave me the absolute conviction of my ear just as I was about to begin *The Rite of Spring*'. The more violent subject matter of *The Rite* naturally produced harsher, more violent music. But the technical complexities of the later ballet would hardly have been imaginable without the experiments of the earlier one, seemingly so fresh and spontaneous in effect, yet almost certainly the outcome – like all Stravinsky's mature work – of laborious testings and retestings at the piano.

Early concert performances of *Petrushka* were in suite form. Today, though, the ballet

is invariably performed complete, usually (as tonight) in Stravinsky's substantially revised and somewhat reduced orchestration of 1946 (published in 1947).

...

We are at the Shrovetide fair, with its conflicting street cries, its fairground barker and its hurdy-gurdies, one of whose tunes, overheard by Stravinsky on a street in the south of France, turned out to be in copyright – an expensive mistake, as it proved. A showman appears with three puppets – the Moor, the Ballerina and *Petrushka* – who, after some mumbo-jumbo with a flute (a passage Debussy adored), come to life and perform a brilliant Russian Dance – this was one of the original concert pieces that Stravinsky had been working on before deciding to incorporate them into his *Petrushka* ballet.

For the second tableau we zoom in on poor *Petrushka* in his cell, railing against his fate. This was the second of the concert pieces, intended, Stravinsky told Benois, as a portrait of the puppet 'giving a performance on the Field of Mars in St Petersburg' (rather than, as he later recalled in his autobiography, 'exasperating the patience of the orchestra with diabolical cascades of *arpeggi*', which openly identifies the puppet with the pianist). *Petrushka* is in love with the Ballerina, who puts in a brief appearance.

In the third tableau, however, she dances for and with the Moor, to a pair of waltzes

stolen from the early 19th-century Viennese composer Joseph Lanner; and, when Petrushka appears, there is a fight and Petrushka is ejected.

The final tableau takes us back to the fairground, much of it in the form of a *divertissement* for a succession of Russian types – wet-nurses, a peasant with a bear, a merchant with a concertina (not, as the revised score suggests, a rake-merchant but a merchant who is also a rake), and so on. But, at the climax, Petrushka suddenly rushes out of the booth, hotly pursued by the Moor, who cuts him down with his scimitar. Everyone is appalled but, while the showman displays the sawdust-filled corpse, Petrushka's ghost appears above the booth, thumbing his nose at his old owner-tormentor.

Programme note © Stephen Walsh

Stephen Walsh is the author of biographies of Stravinsky and Debussy, a study of the Russian nationalists, *Musorgsky and His Circle*, and *The Beloved Vision: Music in the Romantic Age*. He is an Emeritus Professor at Cardiff University.

IGOR STRAVINSKY

Son of a principal singer at the Imperial Opera in St Petersburg, Stravinsky had always been surrounded by music. He embarked on a law degree, ensuring fast-track entry into a civil-service career, but his heart lay elsewhere. The great Russian composer Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov was intrigued enough by the young Stravinsky to take him on as a pupil, encouraging

the writing of his First Symphony and giving him orchestration tasks based on his own operas. The breakthrough came with impresario Sergey Diaghilev's *Firebird* project, produced to satisfy the near-hysterical Parisian taste for all things Russian. Stravinsky was the last-minute choice to write the music after more senior composers had refused. The premiere at the Paris Opéra in 1910 was an unimaginable triumph and Stravinsky was thrust instantly into the international limelight.

Hungry to capitalise on this success, Diaghilev immediately commissioned further ballet scores from his newfound talent. *Petrushka* followed, representing a huge advance in the composer's musical language away from the shadow of his teacher. Then, in 1913, *The Rite of Spring* burst onto the stage. The work defines a high point in musical modernism: its reworking of ancient Russian melodies as a mechanical music spoke disturbingly of the turbulent age in which it was written. As ballet or concert piece, it can still challenge and unsettle listeners more than a century after its premiere.

The war years were spent in exile in Switzerland. Stravinsky began to simplify his musical language, while at the same time, cut off from his homeland, he produced some of his most 'Russian' works – *Renard* and *Les noces* among them. Paris after the war was a changed place, simultaneously melancholic and hedonistic. It turned its back on German

Romanticism and, guided by the likes of Jean Cocteau, looked towards a chic kind of Classicism. Stravinsky followed suit with *Pulcinella*, *Apollo*, *Oedipus rex* and *Persephone*, all of which recast earlier music and cultures in order to assert a new order and directness of expression.

The prospect of Europe at war for a second time led Stravinsky to seek tranquillity in the USA, settling in Los Angeles. Following his only full-length opera, *The Rake's Progress* (premiered in 1951), and exceptionally for a man in his seventies, he again sought to renew his musical language. The late great works, including *Agon* and his final masterpiece, *Requiem Canticles*, engaged with the serial method championed by his old rival Schoenberg. Yet these pieces really only marked a further intensification of the classicising tendency evident in his music over the preceding 40 years.

'Stravinsky demeure' (Stravinsky remains): so proclaimed Pierre Boulez in 1951. Seven decades on and half a century after the composer's death, it still holds true. If anything, his music is now heard more widely than ever before and he continues to speak powerfully even into the 21st century.

Profile © Jonathan Cross

Jonathan Cross is Professor of Musicology at Oxford University. He is the author of three books on Stravinsky and was Series Consultant to the Philharmonia Orchestra's *Stravinsky: Myths and Rituals* series, which won the South Bank Sky Arts Award for Classical Music in 2017.

HANNU LINTU

CONDUCTOR

Hannu Lintu studied cello and piano at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, where he later studied conducting with Jorma Panula. He participated in masterclasses with Myung-Whun Chung at the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena and took First Prize at the Nordic Conducting Competition in Bergen in 1994. He is Chief Conductor of Finnish National Opera and Ballet and recently completed his eighth and final season as Chief Conductor of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Guest-conducting engagements this season include debuts with the New York Philharmonic and Atlanta Symphony orchestras and returns to the Naples Philharmonic, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Swedish Radio Symphony, Berlin Konzerthaus, Gulbenkian, Lausanne Chamber, Montreal Symphony and St Louis Symphony orchestras.

Hannu Lintu's recordings with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra include orchestral works by Magnus Lindberg, Beethoven's piano concertos with Stephen Hough, Zimmermann's *Die Soldaten* and Violin Concerto with Leila Josefowicz, Lutosławski's four symphonies and music by Kaija Saariaho with baritone Gerald Finley and harpist Xavier de Maistre.

DENIS KOZHUKHIN

PIANO

Denis Kozhukhin studied at the Reina Sofia School of Music in Madrid with Dmitri Bashkirov and Claudio Martínez Mehner, and completed his studies at the Piano Academy at Lake Como and with Kirill Gerstein in Stuttgart. He won First Prize at the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels in 2010.

Highlights of the current season include collaborations with the Danish National, NDR Radiophilharmonie, Frankfurt and Vienna Radio Symphony, Gulbenkian, Belgian National, Indianapolis Symphony and Borusan Philharmonic orchestras, and debuts with the Royal Scottish National and Strasbourg Philharmonic orchestras. He also appears in recital at the Tsinandali and Lille Piano festivals and at Cadogan Hall, Carnegie Hall, New York, deSingel in Antwerp and the Megaron in Athens.

Denis Kozhukhin's most recent recording, Franck's *Symphonic Variations* with the Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra under Gustavo Gimeno, was released in 2020. Other recordings include an album of Mendelssohn's *Songs without Words* and Grieg's *Lyric Pieces* (nominated for an Opus Klassik Award), concertos by Gershwin, Grieg, Ravel and Tchaikovsky, and solo works by Brahms, Haydn and Prokofiev.

TRINITY BOYS CHOIR

OLIVER BARLOW, ARLO MURRAY TREBLES

Trinity Boys Choir comprises pupils of Trinity School, Croydon, and has been directed by David Swinson since 2001. The boys frequently appear in operas at Glyndebourne, Garsington, the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, English National Opera and throughout the world. The choir is especially well known for its role in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which it has appeared in over 150 professional performances and on CD and DVD.

Trinity's soloists frequently perform principal roles in operas and concerts. Recent appearances have included La Scala, Milan, the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Paris Philharmonie, Müpa in Budapest and the Palau de les Arts in Valencia. In concert the choir is regularly invited to perform at the BBC Proms and with the major London orchestras, and has toured to Spain, Holland, Germany, Italy, Poland, China and Japan.

Trinity Boys Choir appears on Sir John Eliot Gardiner's recording of Bach's *St Matthew Passion* and has also recorded Ludford's *Missa Dominica* and an album of contemporary works, *Refugium*. TV appearances have included *The Royal Variety Performance* and *Strictly Come Dancing*, and the boys can be heard on the soundtracks of numerous films.

BBC SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The BBC Symphony Orchestra has been at the heart of British musical life since it was founded in 1930. It plays a central role in the BBC Proms, including appearances at the First and Last Nights, and is an Associate Orchestra at the Barbican in London. Its commitment to contemporary music is demonstrated by a range of premieres each season, as well as Total Immersion days devoted to specific composers or themes.

Highlights of this season at the Barbican include Total Immersion days exploring the music of George Walker, Kaija Saariaho and Jean Sibelius, the last two led by Chief Conductor Sakari Oramo, who also conducts concerts showcasing the music of Grażyna Bacewicz.

A literary theme runs through the season, which includes a new version of Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and the world premiere of Iain Bell's *Beowulf*, with the BBC Symphony Chorus and featuring tenor Stuart Skelton. Ian McEwan joins the orchestra to read from his own works, with music curated around his readings.

The BBC Symphony Chorus joins the BBC SO for Michael Tippett's *A Child of Our Time*,

under Conductor Laureate Sir Andrew Davis, with soloists including Pumeza Matshikiza and Dame Sarah Connolly.

Among this season's world and UK premieres are Victoria Borisova-Ollas's *A Portrait of a Lady by Swan Lake*, Kaija Saariaho's *Saarikoski Songs* and Valerie Coleman's *Umoja (Anthem of Unity)*, and the season comes to a close with the UK premiere of Joby Talbot's opera *Everest*.

The vast majority of the BBC SO's performances are broadcast on BBC Radio 3 and a number of studio recordings each season are free to attend. These often feature up-and-coming talent, including members of BBC Radio 3's New Generation Artists scheme. All broadcasts are available for 30 days on BBC Sounds, and the BBC SO can also be seen on BBC TV and BBC iPlayer, and heard on the BBC's online archive, Experience Classical.

The BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus – alongside the BBC Concert Orchestra, BBC Singers and BBC Proms – also offer innovative education and community activities and take a lead role in the BBC Ten Pieces and BBC Young Composer programmes.

Keep up to date with the BBC Symphony Orchestra

To find out more about upcoming events and broadcasts, and for the latest BBC SO news, visit bbc.co.uk/symphonyorchestra.

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Chief Conductor
Sakari Oramo

Principal Guest Conductor
Dalia Stasevska

Günter Wand
Conducting Chair
Semyon Bychkov

Conductor Laureate
Sir Andrew Davis

Creative Artist in Association
Jules Buckley

First Violins
Igor Yuzefovich *Leader*
Cellerina Park
Jeremy Martin
Celia Waterhouse
Shirley Turner
Ni Do
Molly Cockburn
James Wicks
Stuart McDonald
Non Peters
Iain Gibbs
Elizabeth Partridge
Ilhem Ben Khalifa
Naori Takahashi
Zanete Uskane
Rasa Zukauskaitė

Second Violins
Dawn Beazley
Rose Hinton
Daniel Meyer
Patrick Wastnage
Danny Fajardo
Rachel Samuel
Tammy Se
Caroline Cooper
Victoria Hodgson
Lucica Trita
Fiona Brett
Nikki Gleed

Violas
Edward Vanderspar
Philip Hall
Joshua Hayward
Nikos Zarb
Audrey Henning

Natalie Taylor
Carolyn Scott
Mary Whittle
Peter Mallinson
Matthias Wiesner
Anna Barsegjana
Family Frith

Cellos
Ernst Simon Glaser
Tamsy Kaner
Mark Sheridan
Clare Hinton
Michael Atkinson
Augusta Harris
Auriol Evans
Anna Beryl
Ghislaina McMullin
Deni Teo

Double Basses
Chris West
Anita Langridge
Michael Clarke
Beverley Jones
Josie Ellis
Elen Pan
Cathy Elliott
Lewis Reid

Flutes
Michael Cox
Tomoka Mukai
Daniel Pailthorpe

Piccolo
Patricia Moynihan

Oboes
James Hulme
Imogen Smith

Cor Anglais
Jessica Mogridge

Clarinets
Miquel Ramos
Jonathan Parkin
Clara Doyle

Bass Clarinet
Thomas Lessels

Bassoons
Julie Price
Graham Hobbs

Contrabassoon
Ruth Rosales

Horns
Martin Owen
Michael Murray
Andrew Antcliff
Nicholas Hougham
Mark Wood

Trumpets
Philip Cobb
Joseph Atkins
Martin Hurrell
Niall Keatley

Trombones
Helen Vollam
Dan Jenkins

Bass Trombone
Paul Lambert

Tuba
Sam Elliott

Timpani
Tom Edwards

Percussion
Alex Neal
Fiona Ritchie
Joseph Cooper
Jeremy Cornes
Joseph Richards

Harps
Marion Ravot
Tamara Young

Piano
Elizabeth Burley

Celesta
Joanna Elms

The list of players was correct at the time of going to press

Acting Co-Director/Planning Manager
Tom Philpott

Planning Co-ordinators
Bethany McLeish
Naomi Faulkner

Acting Co-Director/Orchestra Manager
Susanna Simmons

Orchestra Personnel Manager
Murray Richmond

Orchestras and Tours Assistant
Indira Sills-Toomey

Concerts Manager
Marelle McCallum

Tours Manager
Kathryn Aldersea

Music Libraries Manager
Mark Millidge

Orchestral Librarian
Julia Simpson

Chorus Manager
Wesley John

Chief Producer
Ann McKay

Assistant Producer
Ben Warren

Senior Stage Manager
Rupert Casey

Stage Manager
Michael Officer

Senior Commercial, Rights and Business Affairs Executive
Ashley Smith

Business Accountant
Nimisha Ladwa

BBC London Orchestras and Choirs Marketing and Learning

Head of Marketing, Publications and Learning
Kate Finch

Communications Manager
Jo Hawkins

Publicist
Freya Edgeworth

Marketing Manager
Sarah Hirons

Marketing Executives
Jenny Barrett
Alice White

Senior Learning Project Managers (job share)
Lauren Creed
Melanie Fryer

Learning Project Managers
Alison Dancer
Laura Mitchell

Assistant Learning Project Managers
Siân Bateman
Catherine Humphrey
Elisa Mare

STEP Trainees
Sharni Edmonson
Joey Williams

Surtitles Operator
Damien Kennedy

Programme produced by BBC Proms Publications

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as *Carmen*

**MICHAEL
SPYRES**
as *Don José*



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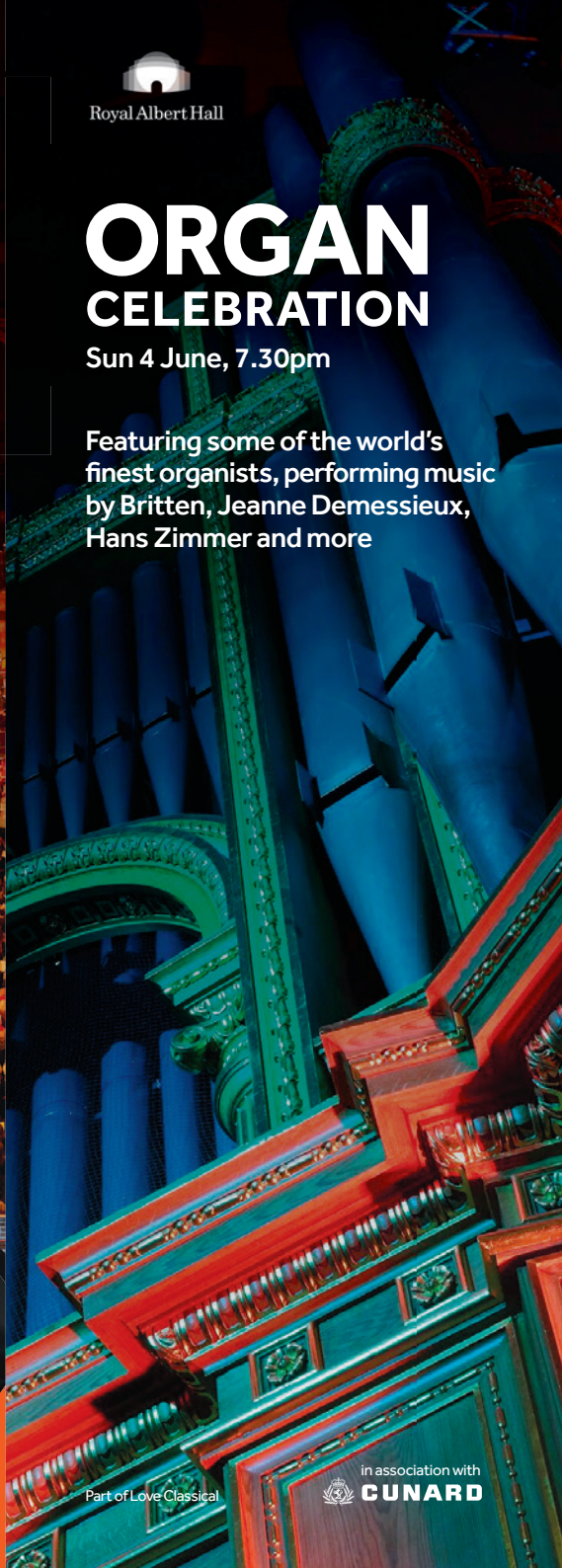


Royal Albert Hall

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CONCERTS IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY

SUNDAY 15 JANUARY 3.00PM

Rachmaninov and Lyatoshyinsky

SERGEY RACHMANINOV

Piano Concerto No. 3 in D minor

BORIS LYATOSHYNSKY

Symphony No. 3 in B minor

Kirill Karabits *conductor*

Anna Fedorova *piano*

FRIDAY 20 JANUARY 7.30PM

RYAN WIGGLESWORTH

Till Dawning *UK premiere*

GUSTAV MAHLER

Symphony No. 5

Ryan Wigglesworth *conductor*

Elizabeth Watts *soprano*

SATURDAY 28 JANUARY 5.00PM

Our Precious Planet with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Grégoire Pont

Dalia Stasevska *conductor*

Grégoire Pont *illustrator and animator*

Marvel at the beauty and fragility of our world in a family concert of sound and storytelling, with Grégoire Pont's drawings projected live alongside thrilling music.

FRIDAY 3 FEBRUARY 7.30PM

Oramo conducts Dvořák and Bacewicz

GRAŻYNA BACEWICZ

Overture

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Bassoon Concerto in B flat major, K191

EDWARD ELGAR

Romance for bassoon and orchestra

ANTONÍN DVOŘÁK

Symphony No. 8 in G major

Sakari Oramo *conductor*

Julie Price *bassoon*

FRIDAY 10 FEBRUARY 7.30PM

Johan Dalene and Timothy Ridout perform Mozart

GRAŻYNA BACEWICZ

Symphony No. 4

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART

Sinfonia concertante in E flat major for violin, viola and orchestra

KAROL SZYMANOWSKI

Symphony No. 3, 'The Song of the Night'

Sakari Oramo *conductor*

Johan Dalene *violin*

Timothy Ridout *viola*

Nicky Spence *tenor*

BBC Symphony Chorus

FRIDAY 17 FEBRUARY 7.30PM

Rachmaninov's Rhapsody and Stravinsky's Petrushka

MAGNUS LINDBERG

Serenades *UK premiere*

SERGEY RACHMANINOV

Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini

GALINA USTVOLSKAYA

Symphony No. 1

IGOR STRAVINSKY *Petrushka (1947 version)*

Hannu Lintu *conductor*

Denis Kozhukhin *piano*

FRIDAY 24 FEBRUARY 7.30PM

New conducts American dreams and sonic fireworks

JOHN ADAMS

The Chairman Dances

GEORGE GERSHWIN

Piano Concerto in F major

VALERIE COLEMAN *Umoja*

(Anthem of Unity) *UK premiere*

SAMUEL BARBER *Symphony No. 1*

Gemma New *conductor*

Lise de la Salle *piano*

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