

LSO

London Symphony Orchestra
Living Music



London's Symphony Orchestra

barbican

Resident
Orchestra

MICHAEL TILSON THOMAS

Thursday 12 December 2013 7.30pm
Barbican Hall

Liszt Mephisto Waltz *page 3*
Prokofiev Piano Concerto No 1 *page 4*
Tchaikovsky Symphony No 5 *page 6*

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Simon Trpčeski piano

Concert finishes approx 9.25pm

RECOMMENDED BY
CLASSIC *f*M

Thursday 19 December 2013 7.30pm
Barbican Hall

Rimsky-Korsakov Dubinushka *page 8*
Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No 1 *page 9*
Prokofiev Symphony No 5 *page 10*

Michael Tilson Thomas conductor
Evgeny Kissin piano

Concert finishes approx 9.30pm

19 Dec Supported by the Atkin Foundation

Welcome Kathryn McDowell



In the lead-up to Christmas, we have two suitably sparkling programmes to enjoy at the Barbican, both conducted by Michael Tilson Thomas, the LSO's Principal Guest Conductor. The pair of concerts celebrates two of the greatest Russian composers – Tchaikovsky and Prokofiev – with performances of their First Piano Concertos and Fifth Symphonies. It was the conductor's particular wish to accompany these works with pieces by Liszt and Rimsky-Korsakov.

I'm delighted to welcome the soloists for these two concerts, both of whom are distinguished artists. It is always a particular pleasure to work with Evgeny Kissin; he last performed with the Orchestra in 2007, and we are very pleased that he has joined us again for this concert and a performance on 18 December at Birmingham's Symphony Hall. Simon Trpčeski, who was last with the Orchestra in October 2012, is also a great friend and regular guest of the LSO – we are delighted to welcome him back tonight.

I would like to extend my thanks to the Atkin Foundation for their generous support of the concert on 19 December, and to our media partners Classic FM for supporting the concert on 12 December.

We are also delighted to welcome guests of our loyal supporters Canon Europe, who join us in the audience on 12 December.

I hope that you enjoy tonight's concert and will return in the new year. Before then, have a happy Christmas and a peaceful new year.

Kathryn McDowell CBE DL
Managing Director

Living Music In Brief

THE ARTIST – LIVE IN CONCERT

On 30 and 31 December, the LSO will bring the multi-award winning film *The Artist* dramatically to life on stage at the Royal Albert Hall. Joined by composer-pianist Ludovic Bource and conductor Ernst Van Tiel, the Orchestra will deliver a live performance of the film's soundtrack, played simultaneously with a high-definition screening of the film. Tickets are available for both matinee and evening performances.

royalalberthall.com

CHRISTMAS GIFTS FROM THE LSO

Share the LSO with your friends and family this Christmas. Visit the LSO Live store on our website or on iTunes to browse through the catalogue and choose some great stocking fillers, purchase LSO Friends membership as a gift, or call the Barbican Box Office on **020 7638 8891** to buy gift vouchers.

Iso.co.uk/Isolive

Iso.co.uk/Isofriends

A WARM WELCOME TO TONIGHT'S GROUPS

We are delighted to welcome the following groups:

**Guildford U3A, R Wimberley & Friends,
Welwyn Garden City Concert Club,
Lynn Mephram & Friends,
Gerrards Cross Community Association,
British Emunah Entertains, Hertford U3A,
Redbridge & District U3A.**

Iso.co.uk/groups

Franz Liszt (1811–86)

Mephisto Waltz S110/112 (1859–60)

THE FAUST LEGEND is the medieval story of a scholar who makes a deal with the devil, offering his soul in exchange for knowledge and power. The tale has inspired countless works of literature and music, including pieces by Berlioz, Mahler, Wagner, Schumann and Gounod.

Liszt was always fascinated by the devil and his works, and his own appearance and behaviour more than once invited comparison with the seductive and mocking demon Mephistopheles. The *Faust Symphony*, completed in 1857, explored the characters of Goethe's *Faust*, Gretchen and Mephistopheles. Then in 1859–60 he composed a pair of pieces based on the Faust of the Hungarian poet Nikolaus Lenau (1802–50).

Lenau's more Byronic – and indeed more Lisztian – version of the legend is a loose collection of episodes, some descriptive, others dramatic, others reflective. Liszt chose two of these to form a diptych illustrating sacred and profane aspects of Faust's adventures. The first, for orchestra, is the sombre 'Procession by Night', depicting Faust riding alone through a gloomy forest and encountering a band of devout pilgrims. The second of the two episodes appeared simultaneously in versions for orchestra and for solo piano.

This first *Mephisto Waltz* is among Liszt's most clearly and brilliantly conceived works, with ingenious thematic transformations contained in a concise and exciting form that conveys the hectic, sexually overcharged atmosphere of the scene. Liszt kept returning to the subject: a second *Mephisto Waltz*, for orchestra, was composed in 1881, a third, for solo piano, in 1883, and an unfinished fourth, also for piano, in 1885.

The story of the episode is summed up in a preface to the score. Mephistopheles and Faust appear at a village inn, where a wedding celebration is in progress. Mephistopheles becomes impatient at the drowsy playing of the village band, snatches a fiddle from their leader, and strikes up himself. Under the spell of his playing there develops an

atmosphere of erotic frenzy. Faust dances wildly and enticingly with a village girl, and before long they have danced out of the inn and into the woods. The music becomes fainter, a nightingale sings, and the lovers, abandoning themselves to their passion, 'are engulfed by a roaring ocean of bliss'.

COMPOSER PROFILE

Liszt's father, Adam, was a cellist in the court orchestra of Haydn's employer, Prince Nikolaus Esterházy. He taught his son piano, and was delighted when Franz gave his first public concerts in 1820 at the age of nine. The following year the family moved to Vienna, where Franz studied with the great pianist Carl Czerny and composition with Antonio Salieri, Kapellmeister at the Imperial Court. His debut concerts in Vienna were a critical success; Liszt later claimed that Beethoven, who was in the audience for his second appearance in April 1823, had kissed the prodigy's forehead. Liszt was soon in demand as a recitalist throughout Europe; aristocrats invited him to perform at their private salons, and audiences were driven wild by his command of the keyboard. He attracted and fell in love with many of his female fans and piano pupils, including Countess Marie d'Agoult, who left her husband for Liszt and bore him three children before they split up in 1843.

In February 1848 Liszt became music director to the court of Weimar. After the death of his eldest daughter, Liszt entered the oratory of the Madonna del Rosario in Rome and, in 1865, took minor orders in the Roman Catholic Church. In his final years, he travelled extensively and composed a series of elegiac, often mystical piano works. According to the pianist Louis Kantner, 'Liszt was a devout Catholic: he feared God, but he loved the Devil'.

Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953)

Piano Concerto No 1 in D-flat major Op 10 (1911–12)

- 1 ALLEGRO BRIOSO
- 2 ANDANTE ASSAI
- 3 ALLEGRO SCHERZANDO

SIMON TRPČESKI PIANO

Reviews for the first performance in 1912 varied wildly: one critic described the work as a ‘primitive cacophony’, questioning if it even deserved ‘to be called music’, but another praised the concerto’s ‘brilliance’ and ‘wit’.

The concerto was a form that attracted Prokofiev throughout his life, from his brilliant youth in pre-revolutionary Russia, during his years in the US and Western Europe, and then after his return to Russia in the 1930s and his final years in post-war Moscow. He was a formidable pianist and four of his five piano concertos were composed to display his own wonderful technique: sharp, accurate, with a steely brilliance and great sense of rhythmic excitement.

The concerto form also suited his way of composing. He was not particularly interested in abstract concepts of musical form, but had an instinctive sense of drama which he could exploit in works for a soloist and orchestra. So much of his music presents striking images of contrast and confrontation, strange juxtapositions of mood, powerful rhetoric followed by shy or tender reflection. As with all of Prokofiev’s music, whatever its purpose or emotional climate, the concertos are marked by directness and clarity. There is energy and humour, and when deep emotion occasionally appears it is frequently presented in unexpected guises, and never with the slightest hint of sentimentality.

As he came to the end of his rebellious student career at the St Petersburg Conservatory in the first decade of the 20th century, Prokofiev attracted wide public attention with two piano concertos, which he composed in quick succession between 1911 and 1913. The First Concerto, completed in 1912 but incorporating some ideas he had composed earlier, was carefully designed to show off his pianistic

technique. He was, after all, aiming at a career as a composer-pianist, and needed a work of his own to introduce himself to the public. After a vigorous period of practice, he gave the first performances in Moscow on 25 July and then a week later in St Petersburg.

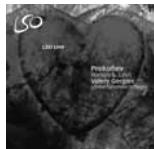
Prokofiev felt he had given a good account of himself, and was also happy with the mixed reviews that he had provoked. This was the year of the poet Mayakovsky’s Futurist manifesto *A Slap in the Face of Public Taste*. Hostile critics, offended by Prokofiev’s high level of dissonance and his percussive treatment of the piano, thought that he, too, was slapping the public’s face.

Prokofiev himself preferred to think of the concerto’s opening as a blow on the head. His reputation for dissonant brutality was in fact much exaggerated at the time. His music was often brash and provocative and he certainly enjoyed being naughty, but there was much more to it than that: a tremendous vitality, a strong lyrical impulse and a rare prodigality of ideas. Most importantly, it is music that makes its effects by well calculated contrast. The sudden harmonic sideslips are so disconcerting because they subvert keys that have been so clearly established; and the energy and high spirits of the outer sections gain enormously from their contrast to the slower central section, which displays genuinely deep (if understated) emotion.

The form of the First Piano Concerto is unusual: a continuous three-in-one movement compressed into little more than 15 minutes. This concise presentation eliminates any hint of self-indulgence either in the form or the material, which is tense and muscular, a breath of fresh air in the stuffy musical world of St Petersburg, blowing away the ghosts

PROKOFIEV on LSO LIVE

Explore more of Prokofiev’s dramatic music on LSO Live, including Principal Conductor Valery Gergiev’s best-selling recording of the famous ballet *Romeo and Juliet*.



£9.99

Available at
Iso.co.uk/Isolive
 in the Barbican
 Shop or online at
 iTunes & Amazon

Sergei Prokofiev Composer Profile

of Rachmaninov's melancholy or Scriabin's cloudy mysticism or the fashionably vague symbolism that had so attracted Prokofiev in his student years. Humour and high spirits are rare enough in music at any time; they were sorely needed at that time in Russia, and just as much needed now.

RUSSIAN PIANO CONCERTOS WITH YUJA WANG



'One of the most gifted pianists of her generation.'
The New York Times

Thu 13 Feb 2014 7.30pm
UBS Soundscapes: LSO Artist Portrait
Yuja Wang

Prokofiev Piano Concerto No 2
plus
Debussy La mer
Ravel Daphnis and Chloé – Suites I & II

James Gaffigan conductor | Yuja Wang piano

Thu 20 Feb 2014 7.30pm
UBS Soundscapes: LSO Artist Portrait
Yuja Wang

Rachmaninov Piano Concerto No 2
plus
Stravinsky Petrushka

Daniel Harding conductor | Yuja Wang piano

Box Office 020 7638 8891 | Iso.co.uk



Prokofiev was born in the Ukraine and from an early age showed a prodigious ability both as composer and pianist. He gained a place at the St Petersburg Conservatory at the age of 13 and shortly thereafter acquired a reputation for the uncompromising nature of his music. According to one critic, the audience at the 1913 premiere of his Second Piano Concerto were left 'frozen with fright, hair standing on end'.

Prokofiev left Russia after the 1917 Revolution, but returned to Moscow with his wife and family 19 years later, apparently unaware of Stalin's repressive regime. Before he left for exile, he completed his 'Classical' Symphony, a bold and appealing work that revived aspects of 18th-century musical form, clarity and elegance. He received commissions from arts organisations in the US and France, composing his sparkling opera *The Love for Three Oranges* for the Chicago Opera Company in 1919–20.

Engagements as a recitalist and concerto soloist brought Prokofiev to a wide audience in Europe and the US, and he was in great demand to perform his own Piano Concerto No 3. The ballet *Romeo and Juliet* and the score for Feinzimmer's film *Lieutenant Kijé* were among Prokofiev's first Soviet commissions. Both scores were subsequently cast as concert suites, which have become cornerstones of the orchestral repertoire.

'The Fifth Symphony was intended as a hymn to free and happy Man, to his mighty powers, his pure and noble spirit.' Prokofiev's comments, written in 1944 as the Russian army began to march towards Berlin, reflected his sense of hope in the future. Sadly, his later years were overshadowed by illness and the denunciation of his works as 'formalist' by the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1948.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)

Symphony No 5 in E minor Op 64 (1888)

- 1 ANDANTE – ALLEGRO CON ANIMA
- 2 ANDANTINO CANTABILE, CON ALCUNA LICENZA
- 3 VALSE: ALLEGRO MODERATO
- 4 FINALE: ANDANTE MAESTOSO – ALLEGRO VIVACE

Ten years separate Tchaikovsky's Fourth and Fifth symphonies, so it is hardly surprising that they are very different in character. By the end of the decade 1878–88, Tchaikovsky's personal life had become far more stable and his public career had expanded into Western Europe. He responded enthusiastically to new impressions, at the same time thinking deeply about his own approach to balancing Russian and Western styles. In 1887 he found himself in Hamburg, where he was approached by an elderly musician called Theodor Avé-Lallemant.

As Tchaikovsky recounted with a mixture of affection and amusement, the old man frankly confessed that he didn't like Tchaikovsky's music, and 'exhorted me almost tearfully to leave Russia and settle permanently in Germany, where classical traditions ... would free me from my shortcomings'. Such a move would have been unthinkable. Tchaikovsky always felt himself intensely Russian and was usually homesick when abroad; but it was, surprisingly, to the obscure and ancient Avé-Lallemant that he dedicated his next symphony. On his return to Russia he sketched it in May/June 1888, completing the score in October.

TCHAIKOVSKY'S FOURTH SYMPHONY is also driven by the theme of 'Fate', which the composer described as 'the fatal power which prevents one from attaining the goal of happiness', in contrast to the optimistic, inspiring conclusion of the Fifth.

The Fifth Symphony has everything that listeners to his music value: clarity of ideas, a sensuous feeling for colour, and a powerful directness of effect. There is little of the traditional German fondness for close motivic relationships, but the melancholy and nostalgia that is so much a part of Tchaikovsky's character is set within a firm classical structure that balances inward doubt against outward strength.

Tchaikovsky conducted the first performance on 17 November 1888 in St Petersburg, then after giving further performances in Russia he introduced it to Germany in Hamburg. He found the next room in his hotel was occupied by Brahms, who had prolonged his stay to hear the rehearsal and 'was very kind. We had lunch together after the rehearsal, and quite a few drinks. He is very sympathetic and I like his honesty and open-mindedness. Neither he nor the players liked the Finale, which I also think rather horrible'. A few days later, though, Tchaikovsky wrote to his brother 'The players by degrees came to appreciate the symphony more and more, and at the last rehearsal gave me an ovation. The concert was also a success. Best of all – I have stopped disliking the symphony. I love it again'. Unfortunately, we don't know the dedicatee's opinion: old Avé-Lallemant was too ill to come to the concert.

First Movement

The overall mood of each of Tchaikovsky's symphonies is established immediately at the beginning. Here the low clarinet and strings present a motto theme that recurs throughout the symphony. Among Tchaikovsky's sketches there is a scribbled note that gives some idea of what was in his mind: 'Introduction. Complete submission before Fate – or (what is the same thing) the inscrutable design of Providence. Allegro: 1 Murmurs, doubts, laments... 2 Shall I cast myself into the embrace of faith?' The music tells us that Tchaikovsky's idea of Fate is not the grim power that dominates the Fourth Symphony but something less hostile, holding the possibility also of happiness.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Composer Profile

Second Movement

The central movements both relate to the varying moods of the first. The horn theme of the slow movement, after the sombre slow introductory string chords, is obviously a love song, and highlights Tchaikovsky's outstanding sense of orchestral colour. The appearances of the motto theme are ominous, perhaps an expression of the composer's own thwarted search for love.

Third Movement

The third movement is a waltz, subtly referring back to a passage in the first movement and reminding us that Tchaikovsky's next major work would be his ballet *The Sleeping Beauty*, with its inexhaustible wealth of dance movements.

Finale

The first three movements all open quietly; the waltz is the first to end loudly, after a subdued appearance of the motto theme. This theme, now firm and confident in the major mode, provides the long introduction to the finale. The main body of the movement is a vigorous, at times hectic Russian dance full of rough high spirits. The motto theme is eventually absorbed into its course, and dominates the coda, where it becomes exultant – or rather, shows a desire to be exultant, which is not quite the same thing, for there is something fragile even in Tchaikovsky's most positive statements.



Tchaikovsky was born in Kamsko-Votkinsk in the Vyatka province of Russia on 7 May 1840; his father was a mining engineer, and his mother was of French extraction. In 1848 the family moved to the imperial capital, St Petersburg, where Pyotr was enrolled at the School of Jurisprudence. He overcame his grief at his mother's death in 1854 by composing and performing, and music remained a diversion from his job – as a clerk at the Ministry of Justice – until he enrolled as a full-time student at the St Petersburg Conservatory in 1863.

Tchaikovsky's First Symphony was warmly received at its St Petersburg premiere in 1868. *Swan Lake*, the first of his three great ballet scores, was written in 1876 for Moscow's Bolshoi Theatre. Between 1869 and the year of his death, he composed over 100 songs, cast mainly in the impassioned Romance style and textually preoccupied with the frustration and despair associated with love, conditions that characterised his personal relationships.

Tchaikovsky's hasty decision to marry an almost unknown admirer in 1877 proved a disaster, his homosexuality combining strongly with his sense of entrapment. By now he had completed his Fourth Symphony, was about to finish his opera *Eugene Onegin*, and had attracted the considerable financial and moral support of Nadezhda von Meck, an affluent widow. She helped him through his personal crisis and in 1878 he returned to composition with the Violin Concerto. Tchaikovsky claimed that his Sixth Symphony represented his best work. The mood of crushing despair heard in all but the work's third movement reflected the composer's troubled state of mind. He committed suicide nine days after its premiere on 6 November 1893.

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908)

Dubinushka Op 62 (1905, rev 1906)

A political liberal and a religious agnostic, Rimsky-Korsakov was a thoroughly nice man who, like most educated Russians, was horrified by the violent events of the revolutionary year 1905. While Tsar Nicholas II and his ministers blindly maintained the principle of rigid autocracy, Russia was increasingly riddled with incompetence, corruption and oppression. The year began with the explosive events of 'Bloody Sunday': on 9 January a huge demonstration of workers and their families converged on the square in front of the Winter Palace in St Petersburg. Troops opened fire on the defenceless crowd and hundreds were killed. Demonstrations and strikes followed throughout the year. Rimsky-Korsakov publicly supported protests by the students of the St Petersburg conservatory and was dismissed from his teaching post there in March.

When Rimsky-Korsakov was in Moscow that October he was deeply moved by the sight and sound of thousands of striking workers singing *Dubinushka* ('The Little Oak Cudgel', ie Policemen's truncheon). Originally a barge-haulers' song (like the more famous *Song of the Volga Boatmen*) it had for years been associated with the revolutionary movement and consequently banned by the authorities. When Rimsky-Korsakov returned home to St Petersburg he was persuaded by the venerable critic Vladimir Stasov to write a stirring piece suitable for opening a concert, for 'now is no longer the time for God save the Tsar'. *Dubinushka* was an obvious choice. The hastily written arrangement was performed on 5 November in a programme which also contained Glazunov's arrangement of *The Song of the Volga Boatmen*.

Both **DUBINUSHKA** and **THE SONG OF THE VOLGA BOATMEN** were originally Russian folk songs, sung by barge-haulers (or burlaks) to accompany their labour as they worked on the Volga river.

The original *Dubinushka* arrangement consisted of little more than a brief introduction followed by an orchestration of the song, lasting less than a minute. A few months later Rimsky-Korsakov expanded it, adding a development and coda and, in the last few bars, an optional part for chorus: perhaps he hoped that the audience would sing along.

COMPOSER PROFILE

Although music played an important part in the early life of Rimsky-Korsakov, he followed family tradition and enrolled as a student at the College of Naval Cadets in St Petersburg in 1856. He continued to take piano lessons, however, and was introduced to the influential composer Balakirev and such outstanding young musicians as Cui and Mussorgsky.

After graduating in 1862 Rimsky-Korsakov joined the crew of the clipper *Almaz* and sailed on a voyage that lasted until the summer of 1865. On his return to St Petersburg, Balakirev encouraged him to complete the sketches he had made for his First Symphony. Composition increasingly occupied Rimsky-Korsakov's time, and in 1871 he became a professor of composition at the St Petersburg Conservatory. He remained on the staff for the rest of his life, with a brief absence in 1905 when he was censured for supporting students involved in the rebellion of that year. Among his Conservatory and private pupils were Lyadov, Glazunov, Tcherepnin, Miaskovsky and Stravinsky. Exotic melodies and orchestrations became a hallmark of Rimsky-Korsakov's mature compositions, powerfully so in works such as the symphonies, the operas *Mlada*, *Tsar Saltan*, and *The Golden Cockerel*, and the final version of his symphonic poem *Sadko*.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)

Piano Concerto No 1 in B-flat minor Op 23 (1874)

- 1 ALLEGRO NON TROPPO E MOLTO MAESTOSO – ALLEGRO CON SPIRITO
- 2 ANDANTINO SEMPLICE – PRESTISSIMO
- 3 ALLEGRO CON FUOCO

EVGENY KISSIN PIANO

This concerto is now so famous and popular that it comes as something of a surprise to hear about the impression it made on its first listener. We don't know what prompted Tchaikovsky to compose it towards the end of 1874, but we know only too well what happened when he played it to his friend Nikolai Rubinstein, hoping for some friendly technical advice on the solo piano writing. As Tchaikovsky later recalled, Rubinstein was at first silent, then began to shout that '... my concerto was worthless, that it was unplayable ... that there were only two or three pages that could be retained, and that the rest would have to be scrapped'.

Rubinstein was usually very well disposed towards Tchaikovsky's music, so what went wrong? The most likely explanation is that Tchaikovsky wasn't up to giving a convincing impression of this hugely demanding work. He was a competent pianist but no virtuoso and Rubinstein probably heard more wrong notes than right ones in the composer's nervous performance. Rubinstein soon changed his opinion, though, for not only did he conduct the first Moscow performance less than a year later, he then learned the solo part and eventually became one of its most persuasive champions.

The concerto has puzzled many other people since then, usually the people who expect a minor-key piece by Tchaikovsky to be full of anguish and self-revealing pathos. In fact this work seems more to be about avoiding darkness by underplaying the

tonic minor key as much as possible. The concerto's opening announces it as a work that looks outwards rather than inwards. After a striking horn call the music swings immediately into D-flat, the relative major key, for a great swinging melody which is never heard again in the course of the work. After this grand introduction, there is something very tentative about the appearance of B-flat minor when the soloist introduces the main body of the movement at a quicker tempo with a delicate tripping theme based on a Ukrainian folksong, and towards the end of the movement the minor mode is banished with almost nervous haste.

The slow movement is a nocturne-like meditation, one of Tchaikovsky's great melodic inspirations. At its centre lies a fast section in which, beneath the soloist's figurations, the strings play another borrowed tune: a French song called *Il faut s'amuser, danser et rire*, apparently a great favourite of the Belgian singer Désirée Artôt with whom Tchaikovsky had for a time fancied himself in love.

The opening of the finale recalls the music vigorously to the tonic minor key with another Ukrainian tune; but it is not the character of this lively dance that dominates the movement. That position is held by the second theme, a surging melody that provides a perfectly satisfying balance to the first movement's long introduction, and at the same time confirms the concerto as one of Tchaikovsky's most extrovert works.

RUSSIAN PIANO WORKS

To hear more Russian piano music, join us at LSO St Luke's in March and April. In a series of BBC Radio 3 Lunchtime Concerts, four leading Russian pianists will give us a taste of their own venerable national tradition, with recitals taking in a selection of the greatest Russian piano works, including music by Mussorgsky, Prokofiev, Rachmaninov, Shostakovich and Scriabin.

To find out more, visit
Iso.co.uk/lunchtime-concerts



Sergei Prokofiev (1891–1953)

Symphony No 5 in B-flat major Op 100 (1944)

- 1 ANDANTE
- 2 ALLEGRO MARCATO
- 3 ADAGIO
- 4 ALLEGRO GIOCOSSO

Until the appearance of his Fifth Symphony in 1945, Prokofiev was known chiefly as a composer for the stage and for his own instrument, the piano. No one thought of him as primarily a symphonist. Abstract formal thinking played little part in his style: musical architecture served simply as the best means of bringing together the ideas that came to him so spontaneously and in such profusion.

Prokofiev's First Symphony dates from 1917, and there could hardly have been a greater contrast between the turbulent events in the world outside and this witty re-creation of the 18th century. His next three symphonies come from the years when he was based in Western Europe. Even the composer had doubts about the effectiveness of the complex and dissonant Second (1924–25); the Third, which followed three years later, draws much of its material from his opera *The Fiery Angel*; the Fourth (1930) is closely related to his last ballet for Diaghilev, *The Prodigal Son*.

SHOSTAKOVICH'S SEVENTH SYMPHONY ('Leningrad'), was dedicated to Soviet Union's capital, which, by the time of the work's completion in 1941, was under siege. The symphony quickly became one of Shostakovich's most popular works, and was performed throughout the Soviet Union to thunderous applause.

The Soviet Composer

The change that came over Prokofiev's music after his permanent return to Russia in the mid-1930s was to some extent due to the demands that the Soviet state made on its artists, but it also reflects Prokofiev's sense of belonging, of being at home. He was politically naive, and this was to lead him into grave trouble during the post-war period; but he was never the type of alienated artist at odds with society, and gladly and with complete sincerity adopted the role of 'Soviet Composer'.

The Nazi invasion of Russia in 1941 brought almost a sense of relief. In contrast to the nightmarish atmosphere of the late 1930s, a time of furtive and arbitrary denunciations, arrests and deportations, there was now an external and very tangible enemy. By the summer of 1944, when Prokofiev composed the Fifth Symphony, victory over the retreating Germans was only a few months away and many Russians hoped that the war would clear the air, that a Soviet victory would bring with it a new sense of freedom within Russia. That freedom was not to come for many more years; but a desire and hope for it must have been in the minds of everyone who attended the premiere of the Fifth Symphony in Moscow on 13 January 1945.

It would be a patriotic work, big, heroic and ultimately optimistic.

The symphony's character was inevitably determined by the time and circumstances of its composition. It would be a patriotic work, big, heroic and ultimately optimistic. It would be a symphony of mass appeal, and if it could rival or even surpass the impact of Shostakovich's 'Leningrad' Symphony, so much the better.

First Movement

The first movement has a moderately slow tempo, allowing the ideas to unfold in a spacious, unhurried manner. Prokofiev here assumes something of the epic quality sought by the 19th-century Russian nationalist composers. The orchestration, as one would expect from him, is always clear and incisive; but a particular sense of depth is here given to the music by the frequent use of octave or two-octave doublings. Another notable feature of the

scoring is the frequent use of the lower instruments, especially the contra-bassoon and tuba. Despite the weightiness of the music, the percussion is used sparingly until it comes imposingly to the fore in the very loud coda.

Second Movement

The music of the quick second movement is driven forward by ostinato motor-rhythms, and is full of quirky twists in the melody and odd harmonic sideslips. Prokofiev's balletic gestures here actually derive from music intended to be danced to: some of this material had been sketched a decade earlier and was originally destined for use in *Romeo and Juliet*. For all its directness, the music displays a certain ambiguity. Underlying the high spirits there is frequently a feeling of menace, a sense of something sinister lurking just in the background.

Third Movement

Where the lyrical impulse of the first movement was tempered by an epic sternness, the Adagio is all melody. The flexible time-signature (3/4 – 9/8), the sumptuous orchestration and the rich variety of accompaniment figures enhance the long-drawn lines that rise to moments of a yearning passion that might almost invite comparison with the music of Prokofiev's exiled fellow-countryman Rachmaninov (though neither composer would have relished the comparison).

Finale

After an introduction recalling the symphony's opening, the main body of the finale begins with a perky clarinet tune over a quaver ostinato – a procedure that recalls the character of the second

movement. This is not, however, a regressive move. The finale gradually gathers weight and momentum in its course, and eventually spills over into a powerful coda which manages to convey the expected optimism without ignoring any of the more serious issues the work has raised.

'I thought of it as a work glorifying the human spirit. I wanted to sing of mankind free and happy; his strength, his generosity and the purity of his soul.'

Prokofiev on his Fifth Symphony

Prokofiev wrote of the Symphony: 'I thought of it as a work glorifying the human spirit. I wanted to sing of mankind free and happy; his strength, his generosity and the purity of his soul'. The words have an unfortunate flavour of Soviet orthodoxy; but the music of the Fifth Symphony does in fact live up to these ideals, and Prokofiev quite rightly considered it to be among his finest achievements.

Programme Notes © Andrew Huth

Andrew Huth is a musician, writer and translator who writes extensively on French, Russian and Eastern European music.

Composer Profiles © Andrew Stewart

Andrew Stewart is a freelance music journalist and writer. He is the author of *The LSO at 90*, and contributes to a wide variety of specialist classical music publications.

Michael Tilson Thomas

Conductor



Principal Guest Conductor
London Symphony Orchestra

Music Director
San Francisco Symphony

Artistic Director
New World Symphony

Michael Tilson Thomas is Music Director of the San Francisco Symphony, Founder and Artistic Director of the New World Symphony and Principal Guest Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra. Born in Los Angeles, began his formal studies at the University of Southern California where he studied piano with John Crown and conducting and composition with Ingolf Dahl. At the age of 19 he was named Music Director of the Young Musicians Foundation Debut Orchestra.

In 1969, after winning the Koussevitzky Prize at Tanglewood, he was appointed Assistant Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. That year he also made his New York debut with the Boston Symphony and gained international recognition after replacing Music Director William Steinberg in mid-concert. He was later appointed Principal Guest Conductor of the Boston Symphony Orchestra where he remained until 1974. He was Music Director of the Buffalo Philharmonic from 1971 to 1979 and a Principal Guest Conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic from 1981 to 1985.

As Principal Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra from 1988 to 1995, Tilson Thomas led the Orchestra on regular tours in Europe, the US and Japan as well as at the Salzburg Festival. In London he and the Orchestra have mounted major festivals focusing on the music of Steve Reich, Gershwin, Brahms, Tōru Takemitsu, Rimsky-Korsakov and the School of St Petersburg, Debussy and Mahler.

With the San Francisco Symphony he has presented eight summer festivals including ones devoted to the music of Mahler, Stravinsky, Wagner and American Mavericks, and has made numerous tours of Europe, the US and the Far East with them.

In February 1988 he inaugurated the New World Symphony, an orchestral academy for graduates of prestigious music programmes. In addition to their regular season in Miami Beach, they have toured in Austria, France, Great Britain, South America, Japan, Israel, Holland, Italy and the US.

His recorded repertoire of more than 120 discs includes works by composers such as Bach, Beethoven, Mahler, Prokofiev and Stravinsky, as well as his pioneering work with the music of Charles Ives, Carl Ruggles, Steve Reich, John Cage, Ingolf Dahl, Morton Feldman, George Gershwin, John McLaughlin and Elvis Costello. He recently finished recording Mahler's complete orchestral works with the San Francisco Symphony.

Tilson Thomas's television work includes a series with the LSO for the BBC, the television broadcasts of the New York Philharmonic Young People's Concerts from 1971 to 1977 and numerous productions on PBS Great Performances.

In August 1995 he led the Pacific Music Festival Orchestra in the premiere of his composition *Showa/Shoah*, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima. As a Carnegie Hall 'Perspectives Artist' from 2003 to 2005, he had an evening devoted to his own compositions which included *Island Music* for four marimbas and percussion, *Notturmo* for solo flute and strings and a new setting of poems by Rainer Maria Rilke.

Tilson Thomas is a Chevalier dans l'ordre des Arts et des Lettres of France, and was *Musical America's* Musician of the Year and Conductor of the Year, and *Gramophone Magazine's* Artist of the Year. He has won 13 Grammy Awards for his recordings. In 2010, he was awarded the National Medal of Arts, the highest award given to artists by the US Government.

Simon Trpčeski Piano

'There's a grand romanticism about Trpčeski's interpretations, as well as an attention to detail.'

BBC Music Magazine



Macedonian pianist Simon Trpčeski has established himself as one of the most remarkable musicians to have emerged in recent years. He is praised not only for his impeccable technique and delicate expression, but also for his warm personality and commitment to strengthening Macedonia's cultural image.

Trpčeski has appeared with many of the world's finest orchestras. He is a frequent soloist with the London Symphony and City of Birmingham Symphony orchestras, the Philharmonia and Hallé orchestras and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Other engagements with European ensembles include the Royal Concertgebouw, Russian National and Bolshoi Theatre orchestras, NDR Sinfonieorchester Hamburg, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, the Danish National Symphony Orchestra and the Rotterdam and St Petersburg Philharmonics. In North America, he has performed with the New York and Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestras, The Philadelphia and Cleveland orchestras and the symphony orchestras of Boston, San Francisco, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Toronto and Baltimore. Elsewhere he has performed with the New Japan, Seoul and Hong Kong Philharmonic, Sydney and Melbourne symphony orchestras, and has toured with the New Zealand Symphony. Trpčeski has worked with a prominent list of conductors, including Marin Alsop, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Lionel Bringuier, Andrew Davis, Gustavo Dudamel, Charles Dutoit, Vladimir Jurowski, Lorin Maazel, Sir Antonio Pappano, Vasily Petrenko, Robin Ticciati, Yan Pascal Tortelier, David Zinman and Gianandrea Noseda.

In the 2013/2014 season, Trpčeski will perform in Germany with the WDR Cologne, MDR Leipzig, RSB Berlin, and at the Dresden Philharmonie with Julia Fischer and Daniel Müller-Schott. He will undertake a residency with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

Orchestra in spring 2014, playing Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto, chamber music and a solo recital, and making his play-directing debut with Shostakovich's First Piano Concerto. He will be back in London multiple times this season, appearing with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and performing chamber music and in recital at Wigmore Hall. Elsewhere he returns to play with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, San Francisco Symphony, Concertgebouw Orchestra, Seoul Philharmonic, Paris Opera, the Russian National Orchestra, Prague Philharmonia, Bulgarian National Radio Orchestra, the Tonkünstler Orchestra in Vienna and the Swedish Chamber Orchestra.

A superb recitalist, Simon Trpčeski has given solo performances in New York, San Francisco, Washington, London, Paris, Amsterdam, Milan, Munich, Prague, Hamburg, Dublin and Tokyo. He has received widespread acclaim for his recital recordings on EMI, and his March 2012 recital at Wigmore Hall was released on Wigmore Hall Live. His two recordings of Rachmaninov's Piano Concertos with Vasily Petrenko with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra have also been released on Avie.

Born in the Republic of Macedonia in 1979, Simon Trpčeski has won prizes in international piano competitions in the UK, Italy and Czech Republic. From 2001 to 2003, he was a member of the BBC New Generation Artists Scheme, and in May 2003 he was honoured with the Young Artist Award by the Royal Philharmonic Society. In December 2009, the President of Macedonia H E Gorge Ivanov awarded him the Presidential Order of Merit for Macedonia, a decoration given to dignitaries responsible for the affirmation of Macedonia abroad. In September 2011 he was awarded the first ever title of National Artist of the Republic of Macedonia.

Evgeny Kissin Piano

'Without question he is a phenomenal pianist, a deeply intuitive and sensitive musician.'

The New York Times



Evgeny Kissin's musicality, the depth and poetic quality of his interpretations, and his extraordinary virtuosity have earned him veneration and admiration. He is in demand the world over, and has appeared with many of the world's great conductors, including Claudio Abbado, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Daniel Barenboim, Christoph von Dohnányi, Carlo Maria Giulini, James Levine, Lorin Maazel, Riccardo Muti and Seiji Ozawa, as well as all the great orchestras of the world.

Kissin was born in Moscow in October 1971 and began to play by ear and improvise on the piano at the age of two. At six years old he entered a school for gifted children, the Moscow Gnessin School of Music, where he was a student of Anna Pavlovna Kantor, who has been his only teacher. At the age of ten he made his concerto debut playing Mozart's Piano Concerto K466, and gave his first solo recital in Moscow one year later. He came to international attention in March 1984 when, at the age of twelve, he performed Chopin's Piano Concertos in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory with the Moscow State Philharmonic under Dmitri Kitayenko. The concert was recorded by Melodia, and a two-LP album was released the following year. Given the astounding success of this recording, Melodia released five more LPs of Kissin's live performances in Moscow over the following two years.

Kissin's first appearances outside Russia took place in 1985 (a tour of Eastern Europe) and 1986 (his first tour of Japan). In December 1988 he performed with Herbert von Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic in a New Year's concert broadcast internationally. In 1990 he made his first appearance at the BBC Proms and, in the same year, made his North American debut, performing Chopin's Piano Concertos with the New York Philharmonic conducted by Zubin Mehta. The

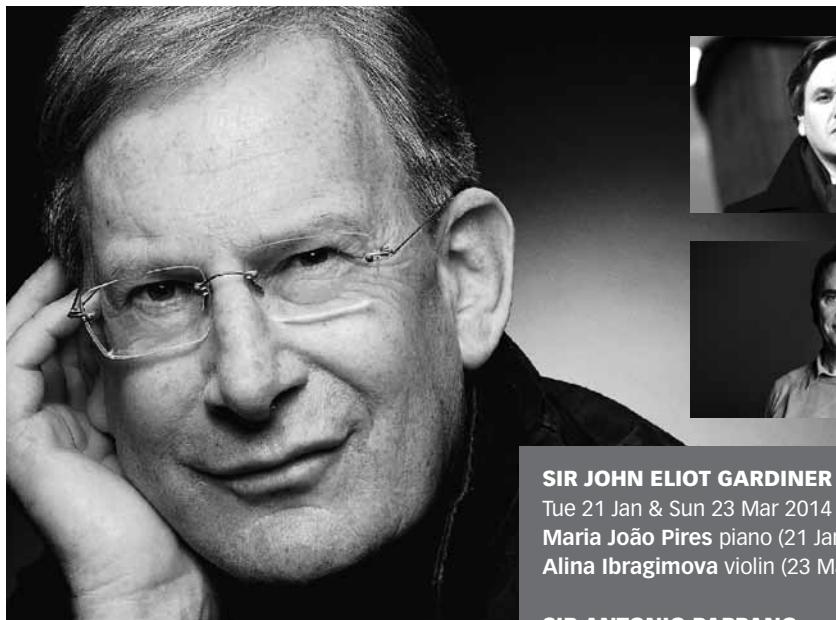
following week he opened Carnegie Hall's Centennial season with a debut recital, recorded by BMG Classics.

Kissin has received musical awards and tributes from around the world. He received the Crystal Prize of the Osaka Symphony Hall for the Best Performance of the Year in 1986 (his first performance in Japan). In 1991 he received the Musician of the Year Prize from the Chigiana Academy of Music in Siena, Italy. He was special guest at the 1992 Grammy Awards, and three years later became Musical America's youngest Instrumentalist of the Year. In 1997 he was the youngest recipient of the prestigious Triumph Award for his outstanding contribution to Russia's culture, one of the highest cultural honours to be awarded in the Russian Republic. Kissin has been awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Music by the Manhattan School of Music; the Shostakovich Award, one of Russia's highest musical honours; an Honorary Membership of the Royal Academy of Music in London; and, most recently, an Honorary Doctorate of Letters from Hong Kong University.

Kissin's recordings have also received numerous awards and accolades, including the Edison Klassiek in The Netherlands, and the Diapason d'Or and Grand Prix of La Nouvelle Academie du Disque in France. His recording of works by Scriabin, Medtner and Stravinsky won a Grammy in 2006 for Best Instrumental Soloist and in 2002 he was named Echo Klassik Soloist of the Year. His most recent Grammy for Best Instrumental Soloist Performance (with orchestra) was awarded in 2010 for his recording of Prokofiev's Piano Concertos Nos 2 and 3 with the Philharmonia Orchestra, conducted by Vladimir Ashkenazy.

Kissin's extraordinary talent inspired Christopher Nupen's documentary film, *Evgeny Kissin: The Gift of Music*, which was released in 2000 on video and DVD by RCA Red Seal.

Coming soon
Concerts at the Barbican and LSO St Luke's



Music
Alchemists
Journeys
with great
conductors
this season

SIR JOHN ELIOT GARDINER

Tue 21 Jan & Sun 23 Mar 2014
 Maria João Pires piano (21 Jan)
 Alina Ibragimova violin (23 Mar)

SIR ANTONIO PAPPANO

Thu 30 Jan & Sun 2 Feb
 Janine Jansen violin (30 Jan)
 Maxim Vengerov violin (2 Feb)

SIR MARK ELDER

Sun 4 & Thu 8 May 2014; Thu 12 Jun 2014
 Imogen Cooper piano (4 May)
 Nicola Benedetti violin (12 Jun)

SIR SIMON RATTLE

Sun 1 Jun 2014
 Veronika Eberle violin
 Anna Prohaska piano

THE COMPLETE SCRIBIN

LSO Principal Conductor Valery Gergiev explores Russian composer Scriabin's vivid, ecstatic orchestral sound world

Sun 30 Mar 2014

Scriabin Symphony No 1
Liszt Piano Concerto No 2
Scriabin Symphony No 4 ('The Poem of Ecstasy')
Valery Gergiev conductor
Denis Matsuev piano
London Symphony Chorus

Thu 10 Apr 2014

Messiaen L'ascension
Scriabin Symphony No 5 ('Prometheus, Poem of Fire')
Scriabin Symphony No 2
Valery Gergiev conductor
Denis Matsuev piano
London Symphony Chorus

Supported by LSO Patrons

Sun 13 Apr 2014

Messiaen Les offrandes oubliées
Chopin Piano Concerto No 2
Scriabin Symphony No 3 ('The Divine Poem')
Valery Gergiev conductor
Daniil Trifonov piano

London Symphony Orchestra

On stage: 12 December

FIRST VIOLINS

Carmine Lauri *Leader*
Tomo Keller
Nigel Broadbent
Ginette Decuyper
Jörg Hammann
Maxine Kwok-Adams
Elizabeth Pigram
Claire Parfitt
Laurent Quenelle
Harriet Rayfield
Colin Renwick
Ian Rhodes
Sylvain Vasseur
Gerald Gregory
David Worswick
Julia Rumley

SECOND VIOLINS

David Alberman
Thomas Norris
Sarah Quinn
Miya Vaisanen
Matthew Gardner
Belinda McFarlane
Iwona Muszynska
Andrew Pollock
Paul Robson
Julian Gil Rodriguez
Violeta Vancica
Justyna Jara
Eleanor Fagg
Ingrid Button

VIOLAS

Paul Silverthorne
Gillianne Haddow
German Clavijo
Lander Echevarria
Anna Green
Richard Holttum
Robert Turner
Heather Wallington
Jonathan Welch
Cian O'Duill
David BaMaung
Martin Schaefer

CELLOS

Rebecca Gilliver
Alastair Blayden
Jennifer Brown
Daniel Gardner
Hilary Jones
Minat Lyons
Amanda Truelove
Eve-Marie Caravassilis
Morwenna Del Mar
Nicholas Gethin

DOUBLE BASSES

Joel Quarrington
Nicholas Worters
Patrick Laurence
Matthew Gibson
Justyna Jara
Thomas Goodman
Jani Pensola
Joseph Melvin
Hugh Sparrow

FLUTES

Adam Walker
Alex Jakeman

PICCOLO

Sharon Williams

OBOES

Thomas Barber
Holly Randall

CLARINETS

Andrew Marriner
Chi-Yu Mo

BASSOONS

Rachel Gough
Joost Bosdijk

CONTRA BASSOON

Dominic Morgan

HORNS

Alberto Menendez
Escribano
Angela Barnes
Igor Szeligowski
Jonathan Lipton
Tim Ball

TRUMPETS

Philip Cobb
Gerald Ruddock

TROMBONES

Dudley Bright
James Maynard
Peter Moore

BASS TROMBONE

Paul Milner

TUBA

Patrick Harrild

TIMPANI

Nigel Thomas

PERCUSSION

Neil Percy
David Jackson
Antoine Bedewi

HARP

Bryn Lewis

On stage: 19 December

FIRST VIOLINS

Carmine Lauri *Leader*
Tomo Keller
Lennox Mackenzie
Nigel Broadbent
Ginette Decuyper
Jörg Hammann
Maxine Kwok-Adams
Elizabeth Pigram
Claire Parfitt
Laurent Quenelle
Harriet Rayfield
Colin Renwick
Ian Rhodes
Sylvain Vasseur
Gerald Gregory
David Worswick

SECOND VIOLINS

David Alberman
Thomas Norris
Sarah Quinn
Miya Vaisanen
Richard Blayden
Matthew Gardner
Belinda McFarlane
Iwona Muszynska
Philip Nolte
Andrew Pollock
Paul Robson
Julian Gil Rodriguez
Violeta Vancica
Justyna Jara

VIOLAS

Paul Silverthorne
Gillianne Haddow
German Clavijo
Lander Echevarria
Anna Green
Richard Holttum
Robert Turner
Heather Wallington
Jonathan Welch
Fiona Dalglish
Martin Schaefer
Caroline O'Neill

CELLOS

Rebecca Gilliver
Alastair Blayden
Jennifer Brown
Daniel Gardner
Hilary Jones
Minat Lyons
Amanda Truelove
Eve-Marie Caravassilis
Morwenna Del Mar
Nicholas Gethin

DOUBLE BASSES

Joel Quarrington
Nicholas Worters
Patrick Laurence
Matthew Gibson
Thomas Goodman
Jani Pensola
Joseph Melvin
Benjamin Griffiths

FLUTES

Gareth Davies
Clare Robson

PICCOLO

Sharon Williams

OBOES

Thomas Barber
Holly Randall

COR ANGLAIS

Christine Pendrill

CLARINETS

Christopher Richards
Andrew Marriner
Chi-Yu Mo

BASS CLARINET

Lorenzo Iosco

BASSOONS

Rachel Gough
Joost Bosdijk

CONTRA BASSOON

Bill Anderson

HORNS

Alberto Menendez
Escribano
Angela Barnes
Igor Szeligowski
Kathryn Saunders
Tim Ball

TRUMPETS

Roderick Franks
Gerald Ruddock
Daniel Newell
Simon Cox

TROMBONES

Dudley Bright
James Maynard
Peter Moore

BASS TROMBONE

Paul Milner

TUBA

Patrick Harrild

TIMPANI

Nigel Thomas

PERCUSSION

Neil Percy
David Jackson
Sam Walton
Antoine Bedewi
Tom Edwards

HARP

Bryn Lewis

PIANO

John Alley

LSO STRING EXPERIENCE SCHEME

Established in 1992, the LSO String Experience Scheme enables young string players at the start of their professional careers to gain work experience by playing in rehearsals and concerts with the LSO. The scheme auditions students from the London music conservatoires, and 20 students per year are selected to participate. The musicians are treated as professional 'extra' players (additional to LSO members) and receive fees for their work in line with LSO section players.

The Scheme is supported by:
The Lefever Award
Musicians Benevolent Fund
The Tillett Trust
The Fenton Arts Trust

London Symphony Orchestra
Barbican
Silk Street
London
EC2Y 8DS

Registered charity in England No 232391

Details in this publication were correct at time of going to press.

Editor
Edward Appleyard
edward.appleyard@lso.co.uk

Photography
Igor Emmerich, Kevin Leighton,
Bill Robinson, Alberto Venzago

Print Cantate 020 3651 1690

Advertising Cabbell Ltd 020 3603 7937