

Programme Notes

TCHAIKOVSKY WITH SIMONE LAMSMA

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THU 17 MAR 2022 • 20.15

FRI 18 MAR 2022 • 20.15

SUN 20 MAR 2022 • 14.15



ROTTERDAMS
PHILHARMONISCH
ORKEST

PROGRAMME

conductor **Stanislav Kochanovsky**
violin **Simone Lamsma**

Valentin Silvestrov 1937
Stille Musik: Abendserenade [2002]

Modest Mussorgsky 1839-1881
Night on Bald Mountain [1867]

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
1840-1893
Concerto for violin and orchestra in
D major, op. 35 [1878]
• Allegro moderato
• Canzonetta. Andante
• Finale. Allegro vivacissimo

Interval

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Symphony No. 1 in G minor, op. 13
'Winter Daydreams' [1866-68/1874]
• Allegro tranquillo
• Adagio cantabile ma non tanto
• Scherzo. Allegro scherzando
giocoso
• Finale. Andante lugubre – Allegro
maestoso

Concert ends at about 22.35/16.35

**Most recent performances by our
orchestra:**
Silvestrov Abendserenade: first
performance
Mussorgsky Night on Bald
Mountain: Jun 2015, conductor
Josep Vicent
Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto:
Dec 2015, violin Joshua Bell,
conductor Pablo Heras-Casado
Tchaikovsky Symphony No. 1
'Winter Daydreams': Dec 2012,
conductor Andrey Boreyko

One hour before the start of the
concert, trombonist Remko de Jager
will give an introduction to the
programme, admission €5. Tickets
are available at the hall, payment by
debit card. The introduction is free
for 'Vrienden'. The introduction is
in Dutch.

cover: In the woods outside Moscow
© Yulia Micheikina



Flaks - Illustration from 'Zhivopisnaya Rossiya' 1897

Silent Music

As a declaration of solidarity with Ukraine we open this concert with Abendserenade, the second movement from Stille Musik by the Ukrainian Valentin Silvestrov. In the composer's own words 'Stille Musik represents metaphorical silence. Metaphorical, because the melody is a symbol of something that cannot be expressed. I call it 'flowers, gathered in the meadows of Elysium'. It can be deemed 'music of the shadows', because profile is as important here as in the theatre of shadows. In music, profile is melody.'

VOICES THAT NEED TO BE HEARD

Boundaries in art are meant to be stretched, transcended and broken. Such ideas have inspired composers through the ages to write new and innovative music. But if their contemporaries were not yet ready for the new, innovative scores were often left to gather dust as difficult, unplayable, or unconvincing compositions.

Modest Mussorgsky was one of such composers to be ahead of his time. He is a composer who was continually 'corrected' and 'improved' - 'for his own good' - by his own colleagues and friends that formed the Mighty Five of great Russian composers of the time. Balakirev and Rimsky-Korsakov especially took great efforts to adapt Mussorgsky's music and to bring it back within the forms and standards that prevailed at the time. One of those works altered and adapted with the best of intentions was *Night on Bald Mountain*. The original version dated 1867 had been completed in just twelve days, but remained unperformed in the composer's archive until 1968.

Boundless impetuosity

The composer was originally very enthusiastic about his 'fiery and

chaotic' but nevertheless very 'Russian and primeval' *Saint John's Night*, as he christened his work. In his letters, he enthused about wanting to portray in music a gathering of witches, accompanied by a song of praise on the arrival of the devil and the delirium of the witches' sabbath. He realised that his music was a little 'too chaotic', and even joked that the composition 'could get me thrown out of the conservatoire'. All the more was his disappointment when his colleagues failed to understand, and even entirely repudiated, the new work. He refused to change the music and would later re-purpose various fragments in his opera *Sorochintsa Fair*.

After Mussorgsky's death, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov created his own version of *Saint John's Night*, and retitled it as *Night on Bald Mountain*.

Whilst the most important themes had indeed been preserved, the sharpest of dissonances and piercing harmonies had been softened at the edges or left out completely.

In his *Chronicle of my Musical Life* the now famous composer explained his aim of creating a rather more 'performable' orchestral work by 'preserving the best bits' and 'adding as little as possible'. Despite his good intentions, the resultant work is a far cry from Mussorgsky's original *Saint John's Night*. Whilst the most important themes had indeed been preserved, the sharpest of dissonances and piercing harmonies had been softened at the edges or left out completely. The tempestuous, phantasmagorical explosions of sound created by Mussorgsky were nowhere to be heard by the first audiences in 1886, replaced by a much better orchestrated and more melodious, but less devilish, witches' dance. Rimsky-Korsakov's talent for orchestration contributed to the popularity of his reworking, which remains much better known than the original version.

Boundless virtuosity

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky is not a composer one immediately thinks of as having suffered musical setbacks. Nevertheless, his music could not always rely on the understanding of musicians and critics. In fact, it was not evident that his *Violin Concerto* would even see the light of day in a concert hall. Tchaikovsky dedicated the work to Leopold Auer, a famous violinist who expressed gratitude for the honour, but declared the concerto to be unplayable. He considered

the solo violin part to be needlessly difficult, and apart from the first movement, entirely inappropriate for the actual instrument. His contemporaries did indeed find the virtuosity of the three-movement concerto a barrier that not all soloists were able to conquer. Only with a performance of the work by Adolph Brodsky in Vienna in 1881 did more musicians (including Auer) tackle this 'unplayable' *Violin Concerto*. The breakneck tempo of the third movement, that music critic Eduard Hanslick once branded as 'much too Russian', remains one of the greatest challenges in the repertoire of violin compositions. These days, the concerto is a compulsory piece for participants in the International Tchaikovsky competition. Its lyrical second movement, inspired by Russian folk songs, is often compared to the melodious, song-long passages from the composer's celebrated piano concertos and symphonies.

Boundless melody

Ten years previously (and at exactly the same time that the disillusioned Mussorgsky hid his *Saint John's Night* at the back of a drawer) Tchaikovsky became almost sick from the criticism thrown at his *First Symphony*. Only after a thorough rewrite in 1874 did the symphony take on its present form, a plethora of lyrical and poignant melodies so characteristic of Tchaikovsky. The title *Winter Daydreams* appears in the

composer's notes and his memories of winter scenes, endless panoramas of snow-covered landscapes between Votkinsk and Saint Petersburg, the falling snow and days-long travel by stagecoach. In notes to the first movement, for example, Tchaikovsky wrote that he dreamed of a winter road whilst composing, and in the second movement of a sombre, misty landscape in the twilight. The most familiar music from the symphony appears in the warm Scherzo movement. An arrangement of a Russian song about flowers in the celebratory final movement Tchaikovsky concludes this melodic, sometimes melancholic, sometimes joyful, symphony: a 'truly Russian' symphony according to the first responses from public and critics. An enthusiastic critic even asserted that 'in every bar one can hear that this was music composed by a Russian'. It is also striking that date wise the *First Symphony* was the very first Russian classical symphony. The work immediately set a high bar and awakened in the West an appetite for Russian music. Tchaikovsky himself described the symphonic form as 'the most lyrical of all musical forms'. Only within a symphony could the composer 'give expression to something that could not be described by words, but that came from the soul and needed to be told'.

Olga de Kort



Photo: Marco Borggreve

Stanislav Kochanovsky, Conductor

Born: Saint Petersburg, Russia

Education: Glinka Choir School, Saint Petersburg Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory in composition, organ, conducting (opera and orchestra)

Breakthrough: 2010, as chief conductor in Kislovodsk

Guest conductor: Mariinsky Orchestra Saint Petersburg, philharmonic orchestras of Moscow and Saint Petersburg, Russian National Philharmonic Orchestra, Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia Rome, Dutch Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, radio symphony orchestras Frankfurt and Finland, Orchestre National de Lyon

Opera: Mikhailovsky Theatre Saint Petersburg, Mariinsky Theatre, Coliseum Theatre London, Prince Igor/Borodin (Dutch National Opera) with Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Eugene Onegin/Tchaikovsky (Verbier Festival), Pique Dame/Tchaikovsky (Opera house Zurich), Iolanta/Tchaikovsky (Maggio Musicale Fiorentino)

Debut Rotterdam Philharmonic: 2015

Simone Lamsma, Violin

Born: Leeuwarden, the Netherlands

Education: Yehudi Menuhin School with Hu Kun; Royal Academy of Music in London with Maurice Hasson

Awards: International Violin Competition of Indianapolis (2006), Benjamin Britten International Violin Competition (2004); Oskar Back Violin Competition (2003)

Solo debut: as fourteen-year-old with the Northern Netherlands Orchestra in Paganini's Violin Concerto

Soloist with: London Symphony Orchestra, Academy of St Martin in the Fields, Vienna Symphony, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Orchestra, São Paulo Symphony Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra
Premieres: Violin Concerto And the centuries surround me with fire... by Matijs de Roo; Violin Concerto by Michel van der Aa

Instrument: 'Mlynarski'-Stradivarius from 1718

Debut Rotterdam Philharmonic: 2009



Photo: Otto van den Toorn

AGENDA

Sun 20 March 2022 • 10.30

Music for Breakfast No.4

Nielsen Serenata in vano

Svendsen Two Swedish Folk Melodies

Sibelius En saga

Fri 1 April 2022 • 19.00

Sat 2 April 2022 • 19.00

Sun 3 April 2022 • 19.00

Ahoy RTM Stage

The Lion King in Concert Live to Film

Sun 10 April 2022 • 13.15

and 15.00

Peer Gynt (4+)

conductor **Adam Hickox**

actor **Rogier van Erkel**

images **Janneke Swinkels** and **Tim**

Frijsinger

Grieg Peer Gynt (movements)

Thu 14 April 2022 • 19.30

Fri 15 April 2022 • 19.30

Sat 16 April 2022 • 19.30

conductor **Jan Willem de Vriend**

soprano **Lydia Teuscher**

alto **Ingeborg Danz**

tenor **Jeremy Ovenden**

tenor **James Gilchrist**

baritone **Dietrich Henschel**

bass **Florian Boesch**

choir **Laurens Collegium**

Bach St. Matthew Passion

Fri 22 April 2022 • 19.30

conductor **Yannick Nézet-Séguin**

Wotan **Michael Volle**

Loge **Gerhard Siegel**

Alberich **Samuel Youn**

Mime **Thomas Ebenstein**

Fricka **Karen Cargill**

Wagner Das Rheingold

Sun 1 May 2022 • 14.15

conductor **Yannick Nézet-Séguin**

soprano **Christiane Karg**

mezzosoprano **Karen Cargill**

Alma Mahler Songs

Gustav Mahler Symphony no. 4

MUSICIANS

Chief Conductor

Lhav Shani

Honorary Conductor

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

First violin

Igor Gruppman, concertmaster

Marieke Blankestijn, concertmaster

Quirine Scheffers

Hed Yaron Meyerson

Saskia Otto

Arno Bons

Mireille van der Wart

Shelly Greenberg

Cor van der Linden

Rachel Browne

Maria Dingjan

Marie-José Schrijner

Noëmi Bodden

Petra Visser

Sophia Torrenga

Hadewijch Hofland

Annerien Stuker

Alexandra van Beveren

Koen Stapert

Second violin

Charlotte Potgieter

Cecilia Ziano

Frank de Groot

Laurens van Vliet

Tomoko Hara

Elna Staphorsius

Jun Yi Dou

Bob Bruyn

Letizia Sciarone

Eefje Habraken

Maija Reinikainen

Sumire Hara

Wim Ruitenbeek

Babette van den Berg

Melanie Broers

Viola

Anne Huser

Roman Spitzer

Maartje van Rheeden

Galahad Samson

Kerstin Bonk

Lex Prummel

Janine Baller

Francis Saunders

Veronika Lénártová

Rosalinde Kluck

León van den Berg

Cello

Emanuele Silvestri

Joanna Pachucka

Daniel Petrovitsch

Mario Rio

Gé van Leeuwen

Eelco Beinema

Carla Schrijner

Pepijn Meeuws

Yi-Ting Fang

Double bass

Matthew Midgley

Ying Lai Green

Jonathan Focquaert

Robert Franenberg

Harke Wiersma

Arjen Leendertz

Ricardo Neto

Flute

Juliette Hurel

Joséphine Olech

Désirée Woudenberg

Oboe

Remco de Vries

Karel Schoofs

Hans Cartigny

Anja van der Maten

Oboe/cor anglais

Ron Tjihuis

Clarinet

Julien Hervé

Bruno Bonansea

Jan Jansen

Clarinet/

bass clarinet

Romke-Jan Wijmenga

Bassoon

Pieter Nuytten

Lola Descours

Marianne Prommel

Bassoon/contra

bassoon

Hans Wisse

Horn

David Fernández

Alonso

Wendy Leliveld

Richard Speetjens

Laurens Otto

Pierre Buizer

Trumpet

Giuliano Sommerhalder

Alex Elia

Simon Wierenga

Jos Verspagen

Trombone

Pierre Volders

Alexander Verbeek

Remko de Jager

Tuba

Hendrik-Jan Renes

Timpani/percussion

Randy Max

Danny van de Wal

Ronald Ent

Martijn Boom

Adriaan Feyaerts

Harp

Charlotte Sprenkels