



ROTTERDAMS
PHILHARMONISCH
ORKEST

Programme Notes

**Daniil Trifonov plays
Mason Bates**

Fri 14 October 2022 • 20.15

PROGRAMME

conductor **André de Ridder**
piano **Daniil Trifonov**

Samuel Barber 1910-1981
Adagio for Strings [1936]

Mason Bates 1977
Piano Concerto [2020-2021]
Dutch Premiere
• Movement I –
• Movement II –
• Movement III

intermission

Joey Roukens 1982
Symphony no. 1 'Kaleidoscopic' [2022]
Commission, World Première
• Always with forward motion
• Ayre
• Scherzo: Night Flight
• Landscape

End of concert about 22.00.

Most recent performances by our orchestra:

Barber Adagio for Strings: Nov 2012, conductor Wayne Marshall

Bates Piano Concerto: first performance

Roukens Symphony no. 1: first performance

Cover: Kaleidoscope. Photo Sonja Blom.





A musical roller-coaster

Sensational heights and the depths of heartache in an evening at full throttle... From Barber's moving *Adagio* via Bates' incredible *Piano Concerto* to the world premiere of Roukens' thrilling *First Symphony - 'Kaleidoscopic'*. Buckle up and phones off!

A nine-year-old Samuel Barber wrote a note to his mother in which he divulged a troubling secret and asked her not to cry: 'I was not meant to be an athlete [sic]. I was meant to be a composer, and will be I'm sure. I'll ask you one more thing.— Don't ask me to try to forget this unpleasant thing and go play football.—Please—'

It's a knockout!

With his dream come true, Barber became a composer. As an admirer of Brahms he wanted nothing more than to express his feelings through music. His first composition, written when he was just seven, he entitled *Sadness*. Barber won many prizes from a young age, including the Prix de Rome. Once Barber had arrived in Rome, the director of the American Institute challenged him to write a string quartet. Accepting the challenge, he rented a house in the Austrian Alps and set to work. At the end

of summer he wrote to cellist Orlando Cole: 'I have just finished the slow movement of my quartet today, and it is a knockout!' No one less than Toscanini asked him to score the *Adagio* for a string orchestra. Barber sent the score to the celebrated conductor, who promptly returned it without comment. This came as bitter disappointment to Barber, but the misunderstanding was quickly resolved. On 5 November 1938, having studied the score in detail, Toscanini conducted the *Adagio for Strings* for an American radio station entirely by memory. The overwhelming climax of penetrating strings left no one unmoved. The music received worldwide attention when it was played at the funeral of Roosevelt, encapsulated the sadness of the world at the murder of J F Kennedy, and performed in countless concert halls in response to the 9/11 attacks of 2001. Its power to enrapture was also recognised

by DJ Tiësto and Armin van Buuren, who both reworked the Adagio into steamy techno versions.

Virtuoso pyrotechnics

The American composer Mason Bates would undoubtedly appreciate such a cross-over. Also performing under the name DJ Masonic, he expressed the hope that his *Piano Concerto* would switch pop musicians on to classical Music, and vice versa. Much of his music combines traditional instruments with electronic sounds, and the composer himself is often to be found behind his laptop, amongst all the other musicians. But for his latest work – written during the pandemic for Daniil Trifonov – he left the electronics behind him and delved deep into history. His inspiration for the first movement came from the Renaissance, in which the pianist plays ornamentation over a four-part chorale, led by the lute-like pizzicato of the string section. The second movement looks back to the Romantic period of the nineteenth century, a source of inspiration shared with Barber. The soloist is consumed by melancholy, whilst the orchestra attempts to bring him out of his shell. It is only when the orchestra plays at its most powerful that the soloist is persuaded to join in. The final movement brings us right up to date with cool jazz rhythms, sparkling wit, and a firework-like fanfare. In January of this year honorary conductor of the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, premiered the work in Philadelphia with, of course, Trifonov as soloist. Each review sought to outdo the others

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in its praise. There was great admiration for the way in which the concerto gave the soloist the scope to demonstrate all their qualities in a score ranging from technical pyrotechnics to intensely felt melodies. Admiration was also given to the brilliant instrumentation and virtuoso percussion section. Reviewer Linda Holt described how, in the finale, ‘the orchestra roared, drums thundered, [...] Nézet-Séguin conducted with a wildness I’ve never seen in him before, and yet, the concerto ended in the perfect marriage of reason and emotion, tenderness and the clamor of enveloping sound.’

Night-time roller coaster

You could say that Joey Roukens’s calling card was music full of rhythmic energy. In many of his orchestral works it’s pure adrenalin that pours through the orchestra. There are elements of this in his *First Symphony* too. We got a foretaste of this during the International Conducting Competition Rotterdam, at which *Night Flight* (the symphony’s third movement) was performed in the finale of the programme. Sharing Barber’s precocity, Roukens penned his first melodies in a notebook as a seven-year-old. ‘When I was a boy aged eleven or twelve I would fantasise about what life would be like as a future composer, and I dreamed that I would write symphonies – not operas or piano concertos, or chamber

music - but symphonies. So when music programmer Floris Don asked me to write a substantial new orchestral work for the Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, my immediate response was to think of a symphony. I was already approaching forty, I’d written quite a lot of orchestral pieces, and it seemed like a good time to set to work. The symphony is a kind of summation or kaleidoscope of all those musical interests and techniques that had occupied me over the last ten years.’ The Roukens interpretation of post-minimalism, echoes of old music, (the Elizabethan airs of Dowland), the slow, elegiac adagios reminiscent of Mahler and Sibelius, it’s all in there. ‘With *Night Flight* I imagine a kind of roller coaster ride through the night, looking down upon a lively city scape, with a musical palette that is both dark in tone yet colourful and full of irregular time signatures and grotesque, fairground elements. There is a quiet and delicate opening to the extremely slow last movement *Landscape*. The music grows gradually, becoming more expansive and indulgent, eventually to evoke an endlessly majestic landscape, before once more dissipating into the small, fragile sound with which the movement began.’

Carine Alders

André de Ridder - Conductor

Born: Berlin, Germany

Education: Universität für Musik und darstellende Kunst Vienna; Royal Academy of Music London

Guest appearances: Chicago Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Nacional de España, Ensemble Intercontemporain

Specialisation: contemporary music in unusual configurations

Cooperations: cartoon band Gorillaz, jazz musician Uri Caine, pop musician Jonny Greenwood (Radiohead) and Bryce Dessner (The National)

Opera: Komische Oper Berlin, Dutch National Opera, English National Opera, Irish National Opera, Staatsoper Stuttgart, Central City Opera Colorado

Founder: Music collective Stargaze, think tank for genre-crossing cooperations

Debut Rotterdam Philharmonic: 2019



Photo: Marco Borggreve

Daniil Trifonov - piano

Artist in Residence with the Rotterdams Philharmonic Orchestra 2022–2023

Born: Nizhny Novgorod, Russia

Education: Gnessin School of Music Moscow with Tatiana Zelikman; Cleveland Institute of Music (piano and composition)

Awards: Chopin Competition Warsaw (2010); Tchaikovsky Competition Moscow; Franco-Abbiati Award (2013); Musical America's Artist of the Year (2019)

Breakthrough: 2011, First Prize Arthur Rubinstein Competition Tel Aviv, also Pnina Salzman Prize, Chamber Music Prize and Audience Favorite Prize

Solo-appearances: Berlin Philharmonic, Staatskapelle Dresden, Tonhalle Orchester Zürich, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, symphony orchestras of Boston, Chicago, New York Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic

Recitals: Carnegie Hall New York, Wigmore Hall London, Musikverein Vienna, Suntory Hall Tokyo, Salle Pleyel Paris

Debut Rotterdam Philharmonic: 2016



Photo: Dario Acosta

Agenda

Sun 16 October 2022 • 10.30

Music for Breakfast 1

Chamber Music by **Pärt, Ter**

Veldhuis, Martinů and **Ravel**

Thu 27 October 2022 • 20.15

Fri 28 October 2022 • 20.15

Sun 30 October 2022 • 14.15

conductor **Han-Na Chang**

cello **Victor Julien-Laferrrière**

Prokofiev Symphony no. 1 'Classical'

Shostakovich Cello Concerto no. 1

Beethoven Symphony no. 3 'Eroica'

Fri 18 November 2022 • 20.15

Sun 20 November 2022 • 14.15

conductor **Adam Hickox**

viola **Laurence Power**

Ravel La valse

Schnittke Viola Concerto

Elgar Enigma Variations

Thu 24 November 2022 • 20.15

Fri 25 November 2022 • 20.15

conductor **Lahav Shani**

piano **Yefim Bronfman**

Beethoven Piano Concerto no. 3

Bruckner Symphony no. 9

Fri 9 December 2022 • 20.15

Sun 11 December 2022 • 14.15

conductor **Jukka-Pekka Saraste**

clarinet **Christoffer Sundqvist**

Wennäkoski Flounce

Nielsen Clarinet Concerto

Shostakovich Symphony no. 8

Fri 16 December 2022 • 20.15

Sun 18 December 2022 • 14.15

conductor **Jan Willem de Vriend**

soprano **Lucy Crowe**

tenor **Mauro Peter**

baritone **Christopher Purves**

choir **Laurens Symfonisch**

Haydn Die Schöpfung

Musicians

Chief Conductor

Lahav Shani

Honorary Conductor

Yannick Nézet-Séguin

Principal Assistant Conductor

Bertie Baigent

First Violin

Igor Gruppman,

leader

Marieke Blankestijn,

leader

Quirine Scheffers

Hed Yaron Meyerson

Saskia Otto

Arno Bons

Mireille van der Wart

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

Elina 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

Olfje van der Klein

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

Flute/Piccolo

Beatriz Da Baião

Oboe

Remco de Vries

Karel Schoofs

Anja van der Maten

Oboe/Cor Anglais

Ron Tijhuis

Clarinet

Julien Hervé

Bruno Bonansea

Jan Jansen

Clarinet/

Bass Clarinet

Romke-Jan Wijmenga

Bassoon

Pieter Nuytten

Lola Descours

Marianne Prommel

Bassoon/

Contrabassoon

Hans Wisse

Horn

David Fernández

Alonso

Wendy Leliveld

Richard Speetjens

Laurens Otto

Pierre Buizer

Trumpet

Alex Elia

Simon Wierenga

Jos Verspagen

Trombone

Pierre Volders

Alexander Verbeek

Remko de Jager

Bass Trombone

Rommert Groenhof

Tuba

Hendrik-Jan Renes

Timpani/

Percussion

Randy Max

Danny van de Wal

Ronald Ent

Martijn Boom

Adriaan Feyaerts

Harp

Charlotte Sprenkels