



Season 2016/2017

Thursday, 8 June 2017

Friday, 9 June 2017

Ilija M. Kolarac Foundation, 8pm

Series: *Philharmania and For Megalomaniacs*

Conductor: **Fabrice Bollon**

Soloists: **LP Duo**

Programme:

J. Adams: *Short Ride in a Fast Machine*

Duration: approx. 4 minutes.

M. Nyman: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra (arr. M. Nyman for two pianos, world premiere)

The Beach

The Woods

The Hut

The Release

Duration: approx 33 minutes.

C. Debussy: *Jeux*, poème dansé

Duration: approx. 18 minutes.

A. Scriabin: *The Poem of Ecstasy*, Op. 53

Duration: approx. 21 minutes.

Concertmaster: **Tijana Milošević**

American composer **John Adams** (1947) is one of the most significant contemporary composers of opera and symphonic music. He studied music at Harvard, with eminent American composers. His early compositions were influenced by radical minimalism (such as e.g. *Phrygian Gates* from 1977), whereas later on in his composing career he started modifying strict, repetitive procedures of building a musical flow. Such is his piece ***Short Ride in a Fast Machine***, one of Adams' most popular orchestral compositions. It was written in 1986, commissioned for the Great Woods Festival. In this piece, Adams stayed true to some minimalistic composition procedures, such as repetition and slow, gradual modification of the piece's fundamental rhythmic formula in the form of ostinati. Above them lie colourfully layered chords with occasional sudden changes in the pitch (which is one of the distinctive features of Adams' style), thus building a very interesting dramaturgy of the piece. Of these *fanfares*, the composer said: *You know how it is when someone asks you to ride in a terrific sports car, and then you wish you hadn't?*

Celebrated British composer, musicologist and pianist Michael Nyman (1944) is also a composer of minimalist and post-minimalist music. He received musical education at the Royal Academy of Music in London and in the mid-1960s he stayed in Romania to study folk songs, supported by the British Government. Nyman has composed a large number of symphonic, concertante, film and operatic music. ***Concerto for piano and orchestra*** was written in 1993, based on the music for the film *The Piano* from the same year. The plot is set in the mid-19th century, and revolves around a Scottish pianist who has been mute since age 6 and uses the piano to express her thoughts. Her father marries her to a New Zealander and she goes with her daughter to her husband. The great success of the music for this film likely inspired the composer that same year to rewrite it into a piano concerto. The single-movement concerto is divided in four sections, through which its themes are presented and then developed on ostinato models, putting together a very emotional and technically challenging piece.

On this occasion, LP Duo will give a premiere of the composer's two-piano version of the concerto.

The dance poem ***Jeux*** by **Claude Debussy** (1862–1918) is one of his last works, composed in 1912 and 1913. It is the first piece in which the composer collaborated with Russian artists, upon the arrival of Sergei Diaghilev to Paris in 1909. The poem is the product of intensive cooperation of Diaghilev (and his dance troupe), dancer and choreographer Vaslav Nijinsky and Debussy. Its theme is a tennis (or erotic) game between a young man and woman. The poem *Jeux* is a synthesis of the composer's music in terms of employing very liberal, typically impressionistic harmonic language, as well as a very bold colourful orchestration. Debussy had been developing his orchestration technique since the *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*, which is today considered one of his best known works, up until his symphonic triptych *La Mer*, composed just a few years before the poem *Jeux*.

Despite the negative reception of this piece at its premiere in 1913, which was largely due to Nijinsky's controversial choreography, the piece survived in the repertoire of many international orchestras in its concert version.

As early as 1904, **Alexander Scriabin** (1871–1915) wrote a poem, with the idea to use it as a programme outline for his fourth symphony, which he started composing the next year. He abandoned the idea about the symphony and, instead, he wrote a single-movement ***The Poem of Ecstasy*** for a large orchestra in 1908. Before this piece, Scriabin had been developing his musical language sticking with traditional formal patterns, influenced by Chopin and late Romantic music, until this composition marked a turning point in his career. Namely, after completing the piece, Scriabin very distinctively and gradually moved in on the territory of atonal music, seeking to achieve a very special, synesthetic work, which he never managed to do owing to his early death. According to Scriabin, although it is conceived in a traditional sonata form, *The Poem of Ecstasy* should represent the joy of unconsciously released creativity, as the means for achieving an end – dance.

Miloš Bralović*

*In the season 2016/17, the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra offers an opportunity to selected young musicologists to enhance their professional training by writing programme notes.