

Season 2015/2016

Friday, 18 March 2016
Ilija M. Kolarac Foundation, 8pm

Concert Series: ***For Beginners***

A concert dedicated to the memory of Zoran Djindjić

Conductor: **Jane Glover**
Soloist: **Daniel Müller-Schott**, violoncello

Program:

R. Vaughan Williams: *Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis* for double string orchestra

Duration: approx. 17 minutes

E. Elgar: Violoncello Concerto in E minor Op.85

Adagio-Moderato
Lento-Allegro molto
Adagio
Allegro

Duration: approx. 30 minutes

M. Tippett: *Fantasia on a theme of Corelli*

Duration: approx. 19 minutes

J. Haydn: Symphony No. 102 in B flat major, Hob.I/102

Largo-Vivace
Adagio in F major
Menuetto. Allegro
Finale. Presto

Duration: approx. 23 minutes

Concertmaster: **Miroslav Pavlović**

Fantasia on a Theme by Thomas Tallis by British composer Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958) was written in 1910. It was premiered with huge success in the same year at Gloucester Cathedral as part of the Three Choirs Festival, directed by the composer himself. He then revised the piece twice, in 1913 and 1919. *Fantasia* takes its name from the original composer of the melody, Thomas Tallis, a distinguished 16th century English composer, who is considered in anthologies of English choral music as one of the best composers of early English music.

Vaughan Williams' piece is scored for an expanded string orchestra divided into three parts: orchestra I is a full-sized string orchestra; orchestra II consists of a single desk from each section, while the third part is a string quartet. With this configuration, he wanted to achieve the sound effect of an organ, where different orchestral sections correspond to various organ divisions. Since Vaughan Williams drew inspiration for many of his works from the English renaissance music, the structure of this piece resembles the Elizabethan-age fantasy. The theme appears in its entirety three times during the course of the work, while the whole musical flow grows from the motifs or fragments that constitute it. A secondary melody, based on the original one, is played by the solo viola, and this theme forms the climax of the entire piece, which comes in its last segment.

In 1919, the London Symphony Orchestra's first season after WWI was opened by the premiere of the Violoncello concerto by Edward Elgar (1857-1934). With Felix Salmond as the featured soloist and the composer at the conductor's stand, the piece had a lukewarm reception by both the audience and the critics, and not even Salmond could make it more popular as he rarely played it in England. Although Elgar was treated as a provincial composer for most of his life, whose pieces were performed at local festivals, his first major success did not come until the *Enigma Variations* in 1899. This was followed in quick succession by pieces of various genres - *The Dream of Gerontius*, *Sea Pictures*, *Pomp and Circumstance* marches, *Introduction and Allegro for Strings*, a Violin concerto and two symphonies.

The Violoncello concerto, which was popularised by British cellist Jacqueline du Pré, is one of the last of his major works, marked by a stylistic shift influenced by new social circumstances. Meditative moods dominate the first of four movements, in which the cello section plays two roles at the same time – the narrator and the protagonist. It directly leads into a scherzo-like second movement, while the third movement is a gentle *Adagio*. In the last movement, which takes the form of the rondo, the lyrical solo section, reminiscent of the second movement's theme, interrupts the humoristic atmosphere several times.

British composer Michael Tippett (1905-1988) belongs to the generation of composers who rose to prominence after the Second World War. Working in the shadow of much more famous Britten, Tippett needed more time before he was accepted by the audience and the critics. Indeed, his oratorio *A Child of Our Time*, written in the beginning of the war, and the opera *The Midsummer Marriage* were seen as breaths of fresh air on the British musical scene.

Tippett's most famous work *Fantasia Concertante on a Theme of Corelli* was commissioned by the 1953 Edinburgh Festival to commemorate the 300th anniversary of the birth of the Italian composer. For the premiere, the BBC Symphony Orchestra was conducted by Tippett himself. The idea to integrate the Baroque orchestral tradition into his distinctive musical expression resulted in old style Concerto Grosso that combines polyphonic techniques, on the one hand, with lyricism and simplicity, on the other, in the ascent from *darkness to light*. The orchestra is divided in three groups of musicians, in the style of Baroque, while the thematic material is based on the themes of Corelli and Bach.

Following 30 years of service at the Esterházy court in Austro-Hungary, the death of the great patron of musical arts Prince Nikolaus finally gave Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) an opportunity to leave the estate and travel to the richest capital of the time – London. Prince Nikolaus' successor reduced the court's rich musical programme and sent Haydn to retirement. Aware of the immense popularity of his music in England, the composer travelled to the British capital at the invitation of the German violinist and impresario Johann Peter Salomon, where he was acclaimed by critics and adored by audiences. He stayed in England twice, in 1791–92 and 1794–95, which was the most prolific period of his career. His twelve *London symphonies* (six for each

of his journeys to England) were premiered in subscription concerts organised first by Salomon and then by his successor Giovanni Battista Viotti.

From a total of 104 symphonies written by Joseph Haydn, two groups of symphonies (six *Paris* and, most notably, 12 *London symphonies*) stand out for their composition prowess and are considered the pinnacle of the symphonic genre of the entire period of classicism. Symphony No 102 in B-flat major was completed in 1794 and premiered in a concert that was remembered because a chandelier fell from the ceiling of the concert hall on the audience. Miraculously, no one was harmed, because they had pressed towards the stage to see the great Maestro from up close.

The first movement opens with slow introduction, whose thematic material evolves into the main motif. The second movement is, actually, an orchestration of the second movement of the F-sharp minor piano trio, and one of the assumptions is that the symphony's movement was created before the trio's movement, although it stylistically fits into the frame of his last creative period. The third movement is a typical folk dance minuet, with a central trio dominated by oboes and bassoons. The finale in the form of the rondo with comical elements concludes the sonata cycle.

Danica Maksimović