

Concert Season 2015/16

Thursday, 16 June 2016

The Belgrade Philharmonic Hall, 7pm

Chamber Music Series *Inspired by Music*

Artistic leadership: **Catherine Larsen-Maguire**

Programme:

R. Strauss: *Serenade in E-flat major, Op.7*

Duration: approx. 10 minutes

W. A. Mozart: *Serenade No. 10 in B-flat major K 361 (Gran Partita)*

Largo. Molto Allegro

Menuetto

Adagi

Menuetto. Allegretto

Romance. Adagio

Tema con variazioni

Finale. Molto Allegro

Duration: approx. 50 minutes

The Serenade for thirteen wind instruments by Richard Strauss (1864-1949) is a youthful piece of music, written in 1881, when the composer was 16 years old. By then, he had already published his string quartet, piano sonata and an orchestral march. As a son of a court opera hornist, widely known for his performing skills, Strauss composed his first works under the influence of his father's musical taste – famous pieces of classical and early romantic music by Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Weber, Mendelssohn and Spohr. Richard's special affinity for wind instruments is discernible in them, which returned again in his last works, after going through various stylistic periods that shaped his oeuvre.

The instrumentation of the *Serenade* includes two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, a contrabassoon and four horns. It was premiered in 1882 under the baton of Franz Wüllner, the conductor known for the Munich premieres of Wagner's *Rhinegold* and *Valkyrie*. In terms of the simplicity of expression and form, the piece relies on the tradition that impressed Strauss, especially

Mozart's *Gran Partita*, but it also already gives a hint of the originality of the future late romantic master.

The most famous works in the serenade genre are signed by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791). Together with divertimenti and many individual pieces, they are typical examples of the style for wind instruments. The music of this type was more popular in Salzburg than in Vienna, but Mozart's activities in the Austrian capital were also more focused on other forms. Out of the thirteen serenades, the most famous is certainly the *Gran Partita* in B-flat major, scored for thirteen instruments – twelve winds: two oboes, two clarinets, two basset horns (an instrument similar to the clarinet and often replaced by it nowadays), two bassoons, four horns; and a string instrument: double bass.

Interestingly, the subtitle in the manuscript was not written in Mozart's handwriting, and the misspelled title has stuck until the present day. *Gran Partita* was composed in 1781 or 1782, with seven movements, at the time when the *Harmoniemusik* genre was at its peak. While working on the opera *Idomeneo*, Mozart composed the *Gran Partita* for performance at the Salzburg court, impressed by the skills of oboist Friedrich Rahm and clarinetist Anton Stadler. The diversity of the instruments he employed permitted him to explore various combinations of timbres, allowing each of them to showcase its potential.

Danica Maksimović