

Season 2016/2017

Friday, 23 December 2016

Ilija M. Kolarac Foundation, 8pm

For Lovers

Conductor: **Fabrice Bollon**

Soloist: **Milijana Nikolić**, mezzo-soprano

Programme:

Manuel de Falla: *El amor brujo*, ballet suite

Introduction and Scene; Song of a Broken Heart; The Apparition; Dance of Terror; The Magic Circle; Midnight; Ritual Fire Dance; Scene; Pantomime; Dance of the Game of Love; Finale.

Duration: approx. 25 minutes

Ernest Chausson: *Poème de l'amour et de la mer*, Op. 19

La fleur des eaux
Interlude
La Mort de l'amour

Duration: approx. 28 minutes

Rodion Shchedrin: Carmen-Suite

- I. Introduction: Andante assai*
- II. Dance: Allegro*
- III. First Intermezzo: Allegro moderato - Andante moderato - (attacca)*
- IV. Changing of the Guard: Moderato*
- V. Carmen's Entrance and Habanera: Allegro moderato - Quasi andante*
- VI. Scene: Allegro moderato - Tempo precedente - Andante assai*
- VII. Second Intermezzo: Larghetto*
- VIII. Bolero: Allegro vivo*
- IX. Torero: Moderato con stoltezza*
- X. Torero and Carmen: Lento - Tempo I*
- XI. Adagio: Andante moderato - Adagio*
- XII. Fortune-Telling: Andantino - Andante assai*
- XIII. Finale: Allegro - Tempo precedente - Andante assai*

Duration: approx. 45 minutes

Concertmaster: **Tijana Milošević**

Spanish composer **Manuel de Falla** (1876–1946) stayed in Paris in the years leading up to the First World War. He met the distinguished artists of the time, including composers Igor Stravinsky, Claude Debussy and Maurice Ravel, as well as the choreographer Sergei Diaghilev. This influenced the evolution of de Falla's personal style, which developed from its early forms rooted in the tradition of late Romanticism towards the mature style characterised by more unrestrained and bolder harmonic solutions. In the beginning of the First World War, the composer returned to Spain and dedicated his efforts to writing incidental music.

The orchestral piece ***El amor brujo***, completed in 1916, was based on the music for the eponymous ballet to a libretto by Gregorio Martínez Sierra (although there are hypotheses that the libretto might have been written by de Falla's wife). The plot revolves around the life of the Andalusian gypsy girl Candela, whose parents arranged a marriage for her. When she grows up, she falls in love with Carmelo. After her husband's death, the husband's ghost haunts the two lovers. Candela comes to realise that her late husband was unfaithful to her and, since she and Carmelo are unable to cast the ghost off with a ritual dance, Candela decides to trick her late husband's former mistress into the ritual dance with the ghost. As a result, the ghost starts haunting his (former) lover. In the score, the composer wanted to combine his skills of composing artistic music with the gypsy traditional music.

After the premiere, the reviews were divided. A part of the critics thought that the elements of impressionism were successfully and skilfully employed, in spite of the challenges posed by the writing of a *serious* work based on the elements of popular music, whereas others said that the ambience of Spain was not adequately presented, most notably owing to the *foreign influences*, which are associated with the elements of French impressionism.

Although his creative expression stems from the academic tradition propagated by the Conservatoire de Paris, French composer **Ernest Chausson** (1855–1899) was influenced by two great European composers from the second part of the 19th century, just as most of his fellow countrymen in that period were. These were Richard Wagner and Cesar Franck. Nevertheless, believing that French music should be free of Wagner's influence, and given his personal inclination towards musical painting of intimate portraits, he aspired to achieving clear form in his works and showed interest in chamber music. In the late 1880s and early 1890s, the composer's personal style evolved towards larger pieces with pronounced dramatic charge. It was in this period, between 1882 and 1893, that his *Poème de l'amour et de la mer* was written, based on poems by Maurice Bouchor. Chausson divided the poem in two parts, separated by an interlude. The markedly pastoral ambience of the score is underlined by subtle, airy orchestration (although not without the powerful sound of the entire orchestra), as well as by harmonic solutions that are unconventional from the perspective of the academic tradition, which are reminiscent of Debussy's impressionism.

In 1967, Russian composer **Rodion Shchedrin** (born in 1932) wrote the *Carmen-Suite*, a one-act ballet by Cuban choreographer Alberto Alonso. The libretto, based on the opera *Carmen* by Georges Bizet (1838–1975), was written by Alicia Alonso. Shchedrin rewrote the music of Bizet's opera for this occasion, using some of the most famous themes and arranging them for string orchestra and a large number of percussions.

The music is organised in thirteen dance numbers. The idea for this piece came from Shchedrin's wife Maya Plisetskaya, herself a Bolshoi Theatre ballerina. She had initially asked Dmitri Shostakovich (1906–1975), and then also Aram Khachaturian (1903–1978) to compose the music for the ballet. Since both of them declined, Plisetskaya finally asked her husband Shchedrin to create this incidental piece. Meanwhile, Plisetskaya had met Alberto Alonso, who (being the choreographer of the National Ballet of Cuba) liked the idea, which was an additional stimulus for Shchedrin. The composer wanted to be more than just an arranger, so one of the key qualities of the composition (which is also performed in a concert setting) is Shchedrin's playing with Bizet's well-known themes, which he interweaves and modifies in the most diverse ways.

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.