

Season 2016/2017

Friday, 3 February 2017
Ilija M. Kolarac Foundation, 8pm

For Connoisseurs

Conductor: **Gabriel Feltz**
Soloist: **Sergio Azzolini**, bassoon

Programme:
F. Liszt: *Prometheus*, symphonic poem No. 5
Duration: approx. 13 minutes

A. Vivaldi: Concerto for Bassoon and Orchestra, RV 481, in D minor

Allegro molto
Largo
Allegro

Duration: approx. 11 minutes

J. Haydn: Concerto for Organ and Orchestra in C major Hob. XVIII: 1 (Arr. by **Sergio Azzolini** for Bassoon and Orchestra)

Allegro moderato
Largo
Allegro molto

Duration: approx. 20 minutes

L. van Beethoven: *The Creatures of Prometheus*, op. 43, ballet music

Duration: approx. 50 minutes

Concertmaster: **Miroslav Pavlović**

The celebrated Hungarian composer and pianist **Franz Liszt** (1811–1886) is considered the founder of the symphonic poem genre. These are orchestral pieces in a single movement with a non-musical, narrative or illustrative element. Inspired by mythological, literary, historical or fantastic topics, Liszt combined elements of overtures with the symphonic way of thinking. In terms of size and structure, these pieces are often compared with the first movement of sonata-form symphonies. In order to achieve coherence of his compositions, Liszt used composing techniques such as motif and thematic transformations, as well as cyclic forms.

Prometheus is the first of Liszt's twelve symphonic poems, composed between 1848 and 1858. Prometheus, a Titan from the Greek Mythology who created man from clay and, as the legend goes, stole fire from Mount Olympus to give it to mankind, is the main character of the mythological template for this piece. In his poem, Liszt wanted to present the turbulent relationship between Prometheus and Zeus, as well as the anguish and hope Prometheus felt while in captivity, until the final deliverance. The original version was created in 1850 as an orchestra accompaniment for a theatre play to the text of Johann Gottfried Herder. The piece was premiered in Weimar in the same year as part of the Herder Festival, during the ceremony of unveiling a monument to Herder. A few years later, Liszt revised the piece, added certain instrumental passages, shaping the piece into a symphonic poem. The first performance of the symphonic poem *Prometheus* was on 18 October 1855.

Italian Baroque composer, violinist and teacher **Antonio Vivaldi** (1678–1741) was recognised already during his lifetime as one of the most influential European composers. He composed concertos, sacred choral music and operas. In Antonio Vivaldi's oeuvre, solo concerto evolved from *concerto grosso*, the typical Baroque form of concerto. *Concerto grosso* is based on the rivalry between the concertino, i.e. a group of solo instruments, and the orchestra. Vivaldi composed in excess of 400 concertos, of which more than 230 for violin, while others were for instruments such as the bassoon, violoncello, oboe and viola d'amore. From his entire oeuvre, 39 of his concertos for bassoon and orchestra survived. Furthermore, there are many double concertos, mostly for pairs of similar and related instruments.

The Concerto for Bassoon and Orchestra was composed in the period 1720–1724. This concerto, as well as other pieces created in this period (including his most famous concertos – *The Four Seasons*), reveal the composer's adroitness and engagement in orchestration, as well as high performance demands for soloists.

Joseph Haydn (1732–1809) is the oldest among the Vienna classicists. He wrote more than a hundred symphonies and established the genre of string quartet by composing more than seventy pieces of this genre. In addition, Haydn is notable as a significant creator of music for the piano, but also as the composer of interesting concertos for various instruments – piano, organ, violin, violoncello, trumpet and others.

Haydn's Concerto for Organ and Orchestra in C major will be presented tonight in an arrangement for bassoon and orchestra by soloist Sergio Azzolini. The concerto was composed in 1756 in three movements. The first and third movements, written in a quick tempo, give the impression of unpretentious virtuosity and generous charm. Haydn's concertos indicate a strong influence of Baroque masters of composition in this genre, giving the impression of the graciousness of rococo, while also announcing more extensive and more serious concertos in the period of Classicism.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827) is certainly one of the most significant composers in the history of Western European music. His music links two great stylistic periods – Classicism and

Romanticism. Thus his compositions reveal influences and synthesis of Haydn's and Mozart's Classicism, as well as his orientation towards the new musical expression that would become emblematic of the new era in the history of European music.

The ballet *The Creatures of Prometheus* was created in the period when the composer was staying in Vienna, searching for the new direction and new expressions for his music. Beethoven used the libretto of his contemporary, Italian choreographer, dancer and composer Salvatore Vigano as the basis for his ballet, which was previously not widely known as an independent form. The ballet, consisting of an overture, an introduction, fifteen numbers and the finale, premiered on 28 March 1801 at the Burgtheater in Vienna. After the first performance, the piece was replayed for another 28 times. *The Creatures of Prometheus* is Beethoven's only full-length ballet.

Bojana Radovanović*

* 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.