

Season 2016/2017

Friday, 7 April 2017
Ilija M. Kolarac Foundation, 8pm

For Adventurers

Conductor: **Eiji Oue**
Soloist: **Mirjana Nešković**, violin

Programme:

R. Wagner: *Tannhäuser*, overture

Duration: approx. 15 minutes

P. Stojanović: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra, No. 2, Op. 11 in G-major

Allegro alla breve, ma un poco moderato
Andante
Rondo – Allegro

Duration: approx. 30 minutes

M. Mussorgsky: *Pictures at an Exhibition* (arr. Maurice Ravel)

*Promenade – Gnomus – Promenade – Il vecchio castello – Promenade – Tuileries –
Bydlo – Promenade – Ballet des poussins dans leur coques – Samuel Goldenberg und
Schmuyle – Limoges - Le Marche – Catacombe (Sepulchrum romanum) – Con mortuis
in lingua mortua (Promenade) – Baba Yaga – La grande porte de Kiev*

Duration: approx. 30 minutes

Concertmaster: **Tijana Milošević**

Richard Wagner (1813–1883) was one of the most influential 19th century German composers. He was active at first as a composer and conductor, but then also as a writer, and even a political activist during the revolution in the German states in the late 1840s. His most significant contribution to the history of classical music was undoubtedly in the field of incidental music, i.e. in the creation of a new music-theatre genre – the music drama, which is based on the concept of completely abandoning the opera with its musical numbers for the creation of recomposed, symphonised musical forms, based on the principle of leitmotif technique, which follows the dramatic text and is divided into acts and scenes. It is vital to note that the composer wrote the librettos for his music by himself. Wagner's early operas, such as *The Flying Dutchman*, *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*, were written in the tradition of the German romantic opera with musical numbers, but they were already showing Wagner's tendency to symphonise the flow of music and break away from the operatic conventions of the day. They were followed by the opera *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, the music drama *Tristan und Isolde*, the tetralogy *Der Ring des Nibelungen* and the opera *Parsifal*.

Tannhäuser was completed in 1845, during the composer's stay in Dresden, where he worked as the Kapellmeister. Wagner was inspired by two legends: Tannhäuser, the legendary 13th century German Minnesänger, and the tale of the Wartburg Song Contest. The overture to this opera is based on the themes that appear in it, such as e.g. the Pilgrim's Chorus, or the Venusberg music from Act 1. The first performance of the overture as a separate piece was given by Felix Mendelssohn with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in February 1846.

Violinist and composer **Petar Stojanović** (1877–1957) was one of the composers who greatly enriched the Serbian classical music in the first part of the 20th century with extensive instrumental and concertante works. Stojanović received formal education in Budapest and later also in Vienna, where he lived and worked as a violinist and composer. Upon arriving in Belgrade, his work as a violin teacher also became particularly significant, firstly at the Stanković Music School, and later at the Music Academy. His music follows a late romantic stylistic pattern, without elements of national Romanticism.

Petar Stojanović wrote five violin concertos, the last one being the most frequently played. **Concerto for violin and orchestra No 2**, Op. 11 in G major was premiered by Jan Kubelik in 1916 in Prague. This piece is nowadays considered Stojanovic's most successful concertante work; however, owing to the lack of orchestra materials, it was impossible to hear it in concert for more than fifty years. Thanks to the composer and retired Faculty of Music teacher Mirjana Živković, the concerto was reconstructed in 2016 and prepared for performance.

The concerto formally comprises three movements in a traditional sonata-form cycle. The first, sonata movement is based on two themes: the first, lively and cheerful theme and the second, lyrical, singing theme. The second, slow movement is written in the manner of a romantic song without the lyrics, which is followed by the final sonata rondo, whose principal, dramatic and striking theme contrasts the two subordinate lyrical themes. This contrast evolves into an exciting, virtuosic and brilliant finale.

The late composing period of the Russian composer **Modest Mussorgsky** (1839–1881) was marked by his great disappointments and retreat into isolation. By 1874, Mussorgsky's opera *Boris Godunov* had achieved success in theatres, but many critics, including Cesar Cui – the composer's friend and a member of the *Mighty Handful* (which included Mussorgsky), produced hostile reviews of this opera. Cui described the piece as immature and technically insufficiently accomplished. In the ensuing period, Mussorgsky wrote the song-cycle *Sunless* (1874), in which he illustrated his loneliness and dissatisfaction. Soon after came ***Pictures at an Exhibition*** (1874), one of the most significant piano pieces in Mussorgsky's oeuvre, inspired by the pictures of the architect Viktor Hartmann, Modest's close friend who had died a year before. A direct inspiration was the posthumous exhibition of Hartmann's aquarelles which the composer attended. The suite consists of sixteen movements, connected with ten pictures plus a recurring varied Promenade that appears six times throughout the cycle. The suite was orchestrated by Maurice Ravel in 1922, when he omitted the fifth Promenade between the sixth and the seventh picture (*Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle* and *Limoges. The Market*).

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.