



Season 2016/2017

Friday, 19 May 2017
Ilija M. Kolarac Foundation, 8pm

For Beginners

Conductor: **Michail Jurowski**

Programme:

W. A. Mozart: Symphony No. 40 KV 550 in G minor

Molto allegro
Andante
Menuetto. Allegro – Trio
Finale. Allegro Assai

Duration: approx. 35 minutes

D. Shostakovich: Symphony No. 5 Op. 47 in D minor

Moderato – Allegro non troppo
Allegretto
Largo
Allegro non troppo

Duration: approx. 45 minutes

Concert master: **Tijana Milošević**

Symphony No 40 in G minor by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1792), ranks among the most famous symphonic works. *The Great G minor Symphony*, as it is sometimes referred to in order to distinguish it from Mozart's earlier piece of the same genre and key, was completed on 25 July 1778. In an exceptionally prolific period that lasted just under two months, Mozart composed symphonies Nos 39, 40 and 41. A while later, he also published the revised version of Symphony No 40, which included parts for clarinet. Decades later, Johannes Brahms donated both manuscripts to the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna, where they reside today.

Some scholars claimed that Mozart never heard this piece performed; however, there is evidence that the symphony was, indeed, played several times in his lifetime.

Given the four-movement structure of the symphony, as well as the composer's procedures and orchestration, this piece is a real amalgamation of its time: the standardised sonata-form first and fourth movements, the slow second movement and the third – minuet with a trio. The scoring is also typical, as it includes a flute, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, two horns and strings. Another distinction of his time, in which there was a gap between the pre-classicistic and classicistic procedures, is the *Mannheim rocket* – ascending tonic triad played in quick tempo, which opens the fourth movement. The use of this musical figure indicates a strong influence of the Mannheim Orchestra, which takes credit for the development of many important features of the symphonic music of Mozart, as well as other composers in this period.

Symphony No 40 was significant for many symphonists, including Joseph Haydn, Ludwig van Beethoven and Franz Schubert. This piece is nowadays one of the most popular classical works, featured in many recordings.

Russian composer and pianist **Dmitri Shostakovich** (1906–1975) is considered one of the most significant musical personages of the 20th century. Although he rose to fame and received many accolades in his homeland of Soviet Union, on several occasions he faced public denunciation of his music and prohibition of composing.

Shostakovich wrote a total of 15 symphonies. Just as his other works, these pieces are characterised by strong emotions, while their sounds contribute to their huge popularity. **Celebrated violinist Mstislav Rostropovich called this symphonic oeuvre *Russia's hidden history*, since he believed that it illustrated the experiences of their country between 1930 and 1970.**

Symphony No 5 in D minor takes a special place in orchestra repertoires around the world. It was composed between April and July 1937 and premiered on 21 November of the same year in Leningrad, now St. Petersburg. Under the baton of the famous conductor Yevgeny Mravinsky, the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra and Shostakovich's pieces achieved great success. **The applauses and ovations that lasted more than 30 minutes, however, appeared suspicious to the authorities.** Since Shostakovich's opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* was reviewed in 1936 as *vulgar, neurotic and inappropriate*, which led to its abrupt removal from the repertoire despite its major success, **representatives of the regime visited already the second performance of**

the Symphony No 5, in an attempt to determine why this piece also became instantly and hugely popular. It can be said that the piece achieved its effect on two different levels – the first one being the way that the authorities perceived the Fifth Symphony and the projection of its ideology in it. The symphony was **received in the public with enthusiasm, as an embodiment of the collective suffering under Stalin.** In certain sources, there is a reference that even the composer himself said later in his life of the success of Symphony No 5: “Of course they understood, they understood only too well what was going on around them and they understood what the Fifth was all about”.

The symphony was composed in the standard, four-movement structure. The first movement brings a confrontation of two agitated, leaping themes from the very beginning and a melody derived from a folk song, recognizable to the audience. The music of the second movement and its ironic and witty nature reminds of the music Shostakovich wrote as incidental or film music. The third, slow movement, emotional and elegiac in tone, was composed in just three days and it includes some of the most touching pages the composer had ever written. The final movement very quickly demonstrates the links with the thematic material and the nature of the first movement. Here we can recognise a few quotations and a self-quotation from the song *Rebirth*, composed to Pushkin's verses. The symphony ends with a grandiose, dramatic finale.

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.