



Season 2016/2017

Friday, 2 June 2017

Ilija M. Kolarac Foundation, 8pm

For Adventurers

Conductor: **Daniel Raiskin**

Soloist: **Maria Solozobova**, violin

Programme:

G. Rossini: *William Tell*, overture

Duration: approx. 12 minutes

P. Juon: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 1 Op. 42

Moderato

Romanze – Andante

Rondo - Allegro

Duration: approx. 30 minutes

M. Daugherty: *Metropolis* Symphony

Lex

Krypton

WXYZPTLK

Oh, Lois!

Red Cape Tango

Duration: approx. 45 minutes

Concert master: **Miroslav Pavlović**

The concert opens with the Overture to *William Tell* by **Gioachino Rossini** (1792-1868). This opera is his last big composition, written in 1829 and premiered the same year at the Paris Opera. The libretto is based on Friedrich Schiller's play of the same name, which drew on the legend of William Tell. According to the legend, Tell was unwilling to show respect to the town's governor by bowing before his hat hung at the square. As a punishment, he had to shoot an apple off the head of his son with a crossbow. As he was an excellent marksman, Tell accomplished the task successfully, but he prepared two arrows so that he could kill the governor if he happened to hit his son with the first arrow, which was interpreted as an act of rebellion against the authorities.

The first stories about William Tell appeared as early as the 15th century, but over time he became an inspiration for many writers and his defiance became the symbol of the fight for freedom. Rossini's opera also had an interesting history of performances in some countries owing to its "revolutionary" plot – in Italy, it had a limited number of productions (it was premiered in 1833, and the next production did not take place until 1856); in New York it was premiered in 1831, and the next performance was in 1923, while its performance in Barcelona motivated an anarchist bomb attack. In the 20th century, many various productions in theatres worldwide brought this opera by Rossini into the spotlight again. However, the opera is now best known for its famous overture.

Overture to *William Tell* consists of four linked sections – The Prelude, The Storm, the pastoral section with prominent passages for English horn and flute, and the final *March of the Swiss Soldiers*, which is sometimes identified with the overture and considered as one of the best known classical music pieces.

Paul Juon (1872-1940) was a Swiss composer, born in Moscow, where he studied violin at the Moscow Conservatory, but he also lived and worked as a violin teacher in Baku, Berlin, Basel, Arau and Zurich. Juon's compositions were highly appreciated during his lifetime. He was nicknamed "the Russian Brahms", as well as the successor of Tchaikovsky. In the 20th century, his works were largely forgotten, only re-emerging in the recent years.

Juon composed the **Concerto for violin No. 1** in 1909, and its opus number is 42. The piece was written in B minor, in a classic three-movement form. Since he was already experienced in writing orchestral pieces having composed works such as the Symphony, Chamber Symphony and a couple of symphonic poems, Juon approached his first violin concerto maturely and conscientiously. Georg Gräner, a music critic and contemporary of Paul Juon, described the concert as a "piece of brilliant uniqueness (...) with a vivacious expression and artistic statement about life". In the second movement, Gräner recognised the Russian "elegiac atmosphere", which reminded him of Tchaikovsky's slow movements, that gives the concerto a special romantic note.

In the second part of the concert, we are ready for yet another hero, the fictional hero of contemporary times – Superman, who served as an inspiration to American composer **Michael Daugherty (1954)** for his Grammy-winning *Metropolis* Symphony.

Daugherty is a contemporary American composer, in whose works we can discern neoromantic stylistic influences, as well as post-modernistic aspirations to “fit” popular arts and culture together with the composer’s creative sensibility.

Metropolis symphony is exemplary of these aspirations. The movements of this five-movement symphony were written as individual pieces commissioned by various orchestras and conductors. Thus, the third movement was actually the first one to be composed in 1988, on commission from the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the first issue of the Superman comic book. Then came the other movements on this topic – the fourth was written in 1989, the first in 1991, and two years after that Daugherty composed the second and the fifth movement. Metropolis Symphony received its first integral performance in 1994 by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra under conductor David Zinman, to whom the symphony is dedicated.

The symphony’s programmatic content is outlined in its title and the titles of the movements. While the title of the symphony is indicative of the place where the plot takes place – the fictional American city of Metropolis, the titles of the movements are references to characters appearing in the comics – the bad guys Lex Luthor and Mxyzptlk; Superman’s darling Lois Lane, his home planet of Krypton, as well as his last battle, which the composer conceptualised as the last tango of the hero wearing the famous red cape.

Ana Djordjević*

*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.