

Season 2017/2018

THE BELGRADE PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

*Water*

Conductor: **Daniel Raiskin**  
Soloist: **Lukas Geniušas**, piano

Friday, 24 November 2017  
Ilija M. Kolarac Foundation, 8pm

Programme:

**Felix Mendelssohn**

*The Hebrides, Overture*

Duration: approx. 10 minutes

**Frédéric Chopin**

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra No. 1, Op. 11 in E minor

Duration: approx. 40 minutes

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**Robert Schumann**

Symphony No. 3, Op. 97 in E-flat major (*Rhenish*)

Duration: approx. 33 minutes

Concertmaster: Miroslav Pavlović

**Felix Mendelssohn** (1809–1847) joined the circle of eminent pianists and composers already as a young man, which led to his 1829 tour of Europe that included his first visit to England. Inspired by the landscapes he had seen on this voyage, the composer wrote two famous pieces – the *Scottish Symphony* and the concert overture *The Hebrides*, composed after his visit to the eponymous archipelago off the west coast of Scotland. He was especially dazzled by the mystical Fingal's Cave on the island of Staffa, whose old Gaelic name translates as “melodious cave”. Enthralled by the hazy sight of robust rocks and sea waves, Mendelssohn wrote a letter to his sister Fanny, in which he included a sketch of the theme, to show to her the impression that the Hebrides left on him. This simple material, a figure in B-minor that symbolises sea waves, became the first theme of the overture and permeates the entire piece, while the second theme, written for bassoons and cellos, is considered one of the most beautiful melodies ever composed by Mendelssohn. The musical flow in atypical sonata form is dominated by a mysterious tone, a multitude of *crescendos* and *sforzandos* are an allusion to the ponding of sea waves against the rocks, while the sixteenth note patterns emulate the shimmer of the water surface. Mendelssohn completed the overture in the late 1830 and initially called it *To the Lonely Island*. However, since he was not fully satisfied with it, he rewrote it and renamed the score into *Fingal's Cave*, while the orchestral parts were called *The Hebrides*. Often described as a tone poem, the piece is nowadays known under both titles, and it enjoys the status of a masterpiece amongst concert overtures.

Renowned Polish composer and pianist, who spent a considerable part of his life in Paris, **Frédéric Chopin** (1810–1849) dedicated his entire oeuvre to one instrument – the piano. Shortly before leaving his homeland, to which he would never return, Chopin composed and very successfully performed both of his piano concertos on Warsaw. Although written after the Concerto in F-minor Op. 21, the Concerto in E-minor Op. 11 was the first one to be published, and therefore labelled as the first. Despite frequent criticisms of the orchestration and the lack of the traditional relationship between the soloist and the orchestra, the pieces stayed on repertoires owing to various possibilities that allowed soloists' to showcase their skills. Hector Berlioz, a friend of Chopin, noticed that the orchestra in these pieces was “nothing but a cold and almost useless accompaniment”, because piano was absolutely dominant.

Concerto for piano and orchestra in E-minor as a typical three-movement structure, and Chopin dedicated it to one of the best-known pianists of the time – Friedrich Kalkbrenner. The first movement is passionate, but also delicate, and the soloist comes in only after the entire orchestral exposition. The second movement is a Romance, inspired by Chopin's love for soprano Konstancja Gładkowska. The exceptionally melodious piano section can also be performed as a standalone piece, since it reminds of a nocturne, while the orchestra is almost inaudible. The composer explained it as a “reverie in the moonlight on a beautiful spring evening, which is like a Romance, calm and melancholic”. The final rondo is extremely virtuosic and demanding for the soloist, based on the elements of Krakowiak – a popular Polish folk dance.

All four symphonies of **Robert Schumann** (1810–1856) were written within a span of ten years (1841–1851), and Symphony No. 3 in E flat major, Op. 97 was the last one to be composed, knowing that the Fourth was written in the same period as the First. Schumann composed Symphony No. 3, nicknamed *Rhenish*, in just over a month, towards the end of 1850 after moving to Dusseldorf, a city on the river Rhine, where the piece was premiered in 1851. The symphony consists of five movements and, due to the choice of its key E flat major, many analyses have touched upon the influence of Beethoven's *Eroica* (especially in the first movement). Certain similarities can also be observed with Beethoven's Symphony No. 6 owing to the use of nature as the inspiration.

The composer wrote the piece following a short trip to Rhineland with his wife Clara, inspired by the nature he saw. However, the piece is not programmatic, because the composer reasoned that it was better that the listeners get their own impressions, rather than have the composer force his opinion upon them. The first movement is energetic, followed by two slower ones – first a *ländler*, as the alternative to the traditional scherzo, and then a lyrical intermezzo, which demonstrates Schumann's skilfulness in writing vocal music. The fourth movement is inspired by the Cologne Cathedral, and its solemn character is highlighted with a simple chorale, followed by complex polyphonic technique. The "cathedral theme" returns in the finale, albeit in a lighter environment, while the ending is triumphant, with reminiscences to the beginning of the piece.

Biljana Aleksandrovski \*

The next concerts of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra are scheduled on Thursday, 7 December and Friday, 8 October, as part of the *Earth* and *Philharmonia* series respectively, at the Ilija M. Kolarac Foundation, starting at 8pm.

**Hans Graf**

**Sergey Babayan**, piano

I. Stravinsky: Funeral Song

P. I. Tchaikovsky: Piano Concerto No. 1

S. Rachmaninoff: Symphony No. 3

Dear subscribers, ahead of each concert of the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra, musicologist Maja Čolović-Vasić will be giving introductory words about the pieces in the programme for that evening, at the Kolarac Music Gallery starting at 7.30pm.

Dear visitors, please turn off your mobile phones; you are also kindly reminded that taking photographs and the use of video and audio recording devices is strictly forbidden during the concerts of the Belgrade Philharmonic. We wish you a nice evening.

\*In the season 2017/18, the Belgrade Philharmonic Orchestra offers an opportunity to selected young musicologists to enhance their professional training by writing programme notes.

Principal Guest Conductor of the Belgrade Philharmonic **Daniel Raiskin** grew up in St. Petersburg. He attended music school from the age of six and went on to the celebrated conservatory in his native city, where he studied viola and conducting. He also took classes with maestri such as Mariss Jansons, Neeme Järvi, Milan Horvat, Woldemar Nelson and Jorma Panula.

At the age of twenty, Daniel Raiskin left the Soviet Union to continue his studies in Amsterdam and Freiburg, and was soon in demand as one of Europe's leading viola players, both as a soloist and chamber musician. He decided to make a gradual transition into a conducting career and soon became recognised as one of the most versatile conductors of the younger generation. Raiskin, who cultivates a broad repertoire, often looks beyond the mainstream in his strikingly conceived programmes.

Between 2005 and 2016, Daniel Raiskin was the Chief Conductor of the Staatsorchester Rheinische Philharmonie in Koblenz, and from 2008 to 2016 he held the same title with the Artur Rubinstein Philharmonic Orchestra in the Polish city of Łódź. His regular guest engagements across Europe and Asia include the Brandenburgische Staatsorchester Frankfurt, Dala Sinfonietta, Düsseldorfer Symphoniker, Estonian National Symphony, Filarmonica de Buenos Aires, Jenaer Philharmonie, Haifa Symphony, Hong Kong Sinfonietta, Karol Szymanowski Philharmonic Krakow, Malmö Symfoniorkester, Mariinsky Orchestra, Mozarteumorchester Salzburg, National Symphony Orchestra Taiwan, NDR Radiophilharmonie Hannover, New Russia State Symphony Orchestra Moscow, Odense Symfoniorkester, Orchestre National de Lyon, Orchestre Philharmonique de Marseille, Orkest van het Oosten, Orquesta Sinfonica de Tenerife, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de México, Philharmonisches Staatsorchester Mainz, Prague Radio Symphony, RTV Slovenia Symphony Orchestra, Shanghai Philharmonic, Slovak Philharmonic Bratislava, Stuttgarter Philharmoniker, Symfonie Orkest Vlaanderen, Tonkünstler Orchester Niederösterreich, Ural Philharmonic, Warsaw Philharmonic, Württembergische Philharmonie Reutlingen and Zagreb Philharmonic.

Among the major soloists with whom Daniel Raiskin has appeared are Martin Fröst, Alban Gerhardt, Natalia Gutman, Peter Jablonski, Janine Jansen, Kari Kriikku, Lang Lang, Francois Leleux, Alexei Lubimov, Mischa Maisky, Vladimir Mendelssohn, Midori, Shlomo Mintz, Daniel Müller-Schott, Steven Osborne, Enrico Pace, Ivo Pogorelich, Julian Rachlin, Vadim Repin, Benjamin Schmid, Dmitri Sitkovetsky, Julian Steckel and Alexei Volodin.

Recent recordings include the entire Brahms symphonies with the label TwoPianists and Shostakovich Symphony No. 4 with the label AVI, both to great critical acclaim. His recording with cello concertos by Korngold, Bloch and Goldschmidt with Julian Steckel and the label AVI received an Echo Klassik Award in 2012.

Born in Moscow in 1990, **Lukas Geniušas** started piano studies at the age of 5 at the preparatory department of F. Chopin Music College in Moscow, going on to graduate with top honours in 2008.

He was born into a family of musicians which played a major role in Lukas' swift musical development, in particular the mentorship of his grandmother, Vera Gornostaeva, the prominent teacher and professor at the Moscow Conservatory. This early development helped Lukas become the laureate of several major competitions including the Gina Bachauer Piano

Competition in Utah, the Silver medal at the Chopin International Piano Competition in 2010. Two years later he received the German Piano Award in Frankfurt am Main. His most recent victory, and one of the most important, is the Silver Medal at the XV Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow in 2015.

Lukas has appeared with numerous orchestras including the Hamburg Symphony, Duisburg Symphony, BBC Scottish Symphony, St Petersburg Philharmonic, Kremerata Baltica, Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra, Warsaw Philharmonic, and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, under the batons of conductors such as Valery Gergiev, Mikhail Pletnev, Andrey Boreyko, Saulius Sondeckis, Dmitry Sitkovetsky, Antoni Wit, Rafael Payare, Roman Kofman, and Dmitry Liss, to name but a few. His international career has taken Lukas to prestigious venues and festivals throughout the world, including the Rheingau, Ruhr and Lockenhaus Music Festivals, Piano aux Jacobins, the Auditorium du Louvre and Wigmore Hall, as well as to major concert halls in Russia and South America.

Highlights of the 2015/16 season have included triumphant recitals at the Salle Gaveau in Paris and London International Piano Series, with the NHK Symphony Orchestra and Tugan Sokhiev as well as with Mikhail Pletnev and the Russian National Orchestra. He recently performed at the La Roque d'Anthéron International Piano Festival and made his début at the Verbier Festival with solo and chamber recitals.

In the 2016/17 season he returns to the Sala Verdi in Milan, Mariinsky-3 and the Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory, and performs début recitals at the Montreal Pro Musica series and Washington Phillips Collection. Important forthcoming engagements also include performances with Charles Dutoit and the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, with the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra under Alexander Lazarev in Yokohama, as well as with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra and the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France.

Geniušas has recorded complete Rachmaninoff Preludes (*Piano Classics*), *The Emancipation of Dissonance* (works by Desyatnikov, Arzumanov and Ryuabov) and other works.

He is the recipient of many prizes and awards in Russia and his native Lithuania. Since 2015, Lukas has been a featured artist of "Looking at the stars" a philanthropy project based in Toronto, whose purpose is to bring classical music to institutions and organizations (prisons, hospitals and shelters) where people may not have an opportunity to experience it live in a traditional setting.