

Belgrade Philharmonic
Season 2021/22
We Have Really Missed You

Friday, 21 January 2021

Gabriel Feltz
Alina Wunderlin, soprano

Franz Schubert
Symphony No. 8 D. 759 in B minor (*Unfinished*)

Allegro moderato
Andante con moto

Duration: around 25 minutes

Reinhold Glière
Concerto for Coloratura and Orchestra Op. 82

Andante
Allegro

Duration: around 15 minutes

Ludwig van Beethoven
Symphony No. 7, op. 92 in A major

Poco sostenuto – Vivace
Allegretto
Presto
Allegro con brio

Duration: around 36 minutes

Today, the *Eighth Symphony* by **Franz Schubert** (1797-1828), better known as the *Unfinished Symphony*, is one of the most important unfinished works in the history of music. The symphony began in 1822 and since Schubert received an honorary diploma from the Graz Music Society a year later, in return he handed over the score of the work, which contained two movements, to his friend Anselm Hüttenbrenner, a representative of the Music Society. For reasons unknown, the score was hidden from the public and 37 years after Schubert's death, in 1867, he handed it over to conductor Johann von Herbeck, who presented it at a concert in Vienna. In place of the third movement, the finale, von Herbeck inserted the finale of Schubert's *Third Symphony*. Even today, it remains a mystery whether the composer had intended to write a symphonic cycle of only two movements or whether the composition was interrupted by something. Although Schubert lived for another 6 years, he did not write the expected other two movements. Instead, the piano draft for a scherzo in the third movement has been preserved and the music that is supposed to belong to the finale has become a great introductory music for the drama *Rosamunde*. To date, more than 100 composers have written the Unfinished Symphony's "finale," but performances of these versions are only sporadic. Stylistically, this symphony is a turning point between two styles - formally the movements conceived as classicist, but the musical language is romantic. The first movement is in a sonata form, developing beyond the classicist framework. Instead of the expected pathos and drama, we have lovely music full of lyrical elements. The second movement is in a calmer spirit with two themes that are repeated in variation. Despite its title, it appears that this symphony did not require any continuation because it is musically and dramaturgically complete.

Since the 17th century in Italy, the word concert has meant an instrumental musical form composed primarily as a constant dialogue or opposition of a soloist/instrumental group and orchestra. At about the same time, French composers began writing specific exercises for the voice that are performed without text, *vocalise*. Combining these two forms, the Russian composer **Reinhold Glière** (1875-1956) wrote his Concerto for Coloratura Soprano and Orchestra in 1943. The use of orchestral instead of piano accompaniment makes this work unique in all of

music literature, surpassing the achievements of other works of the same genre - Rachmaninoff's *Vocalise* and Stravinsky's *Pastorale*.

Glière dedicated *his Concert for Coloratura Soprano and Orchestra* to the Russian cellist Sviatoslav Knushevitsky. In the absence of lyrics, the entire musical expression is focused on the solo section in which the voice is treated as the most perfect instrument. Two movements stand out in the musical flow - the melancholy and lyrical *Andante*, followed by the brilliant *Allegro* in which bravura and virtuoso vocal arabesques take the listeners' breath away.

The *Seventh Symphony* by **Ludwig van Beethoven** (1770-1827), completed in 1812, was dedicated to Count Moritz von Fries. It was premiered at the Great Hall of the University of Vienna on December 8, 1813 under the baton of the author at a charity concert organized for the benefit of Austrian and Bavarian soldiers wounded in the Battle of Hanau during the Napoleonic Wars. The work, which is considered by many as Beethoven's finest symphony, was well received. On that occasion the second movement was performed as an encore and the entire concert was repeated four days later.

Beethoven himself felt that *Symphony No. 7* was indeed his finest symphony, and one of the critics of that time said that it was in terms of melody the richest, most pleasant, and most understandable of all of Beethoven's symphonies. Of course, there were also those who had a very negative opinion of the work. Among them were Carl Maria von Weber, for whom *Symphony No. 7* was proof that Beethoven was finally ripe for the insane asylum, and Clara Schumann's father, Friedrich Wieck, who estimated that music like this could only be written by someone very drunk. Richard Wagner, who himself had problems with critics, was, on the other hand, impressed by *Symphony No. 7*, which he called the apotheosis of dance, assessing it as the perfect dance music. According to him, at hearing the music of the *Seventh Symphony*, tables and benches, pots and cups, grandmothers, the blind and the crippled, and even children in their cradles, would start to dance. Determined to prove his imaginative theory, Wagner himself once danced to this work, to the piano accompaniment of Franz Liszt.