

Belgrade Philharmonic  
Season 2021/22  
*We Have Really Missed You*

**Friday, February 4, 2022**

**Daniel Raiskin**  
**Nemanja Radulović, violin**

**Bedřich Smetana**  
*Vltava*

Duration: about 12 minutes

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky**  
Concerto for Violin and Orchestra Op. 35, in D major

*Allegro moderato*  
*Canzonetta: Andante*  
*Allegro vivacissimo*

Duration: about 33 minutes

**Antonin Dvořák**  
Symphony No. 8 Op. 88, in G major

*Allegro con brio*  
*Adagio*  
*Allegretto grazioso*  
*Allegro ma non troppo*

Duration: about 35 minutes

**Florence Price** (1887-1953), classical composer, pianist, organist, and music teacher is noted as the first African-American woman in history whose work was included in the repertoire of one of the most important professional orchestras, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, which performed her *First Symphony* in 1933. Price composed over 300 works: four symphonies, four concertos, as well as choral works, plus art songs, and music for chamber and solo instruments.

She was born and raised in Little Rock, Arkansas, where she had a very successful career. However, due to frequent racial incidents in the region, which culminated in the lynching of an African-American in 1927, Florence Price decided to move with her family to Chicago, the city to which her artistic activity is mostly connected.

Although Florence Price's music education was largely based on European tradition, her stylistic expression is largely based on the American idiom and reveals her southern roots. She wrote in a receptive musical language, using the sounds and atmosphere of modern urban society. Being a devout believer, she often used the music of the African-American Church as material for her arrangements or as inspiration for the creation of original works.

*Andante moderato* is the second movement of the author's *First String Quartet*. Composed in 1929, the work shows a fusion of personal musical heritage, formal structures and harmonic techniques of European art music. The movement begins with a slow melody, obviously inspired by African-American spiritual music, while its central part is occupied by a cheerful dance. The minor mood returns through a rerun of the initial material that rounds off the movement. On this occasion, we are listening to the orchestral adaptation of the work from 2020.

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** (1840-1893) wrote only one violin concerto, in addition to three piano concertos and a Rococo variation for cello. Encouraged by the visit of his student and friend, violinist Iosif Kotek, during a vacation in the Swiss resort of Clarens on Lake Geneva, Tchaikovsky wrote his Violin Concerto in D major, Op. 35 in less than a month and dedicated it to the violinist. Somewhat later, realizing that Kotek's career was not impressive enough, he changed his dedication, this time to Leopold Auer, a renowned St. Petersburg violinist and pedagogue from whose class Heifetz and Milstein later emerged. However, Auer considered this work unplayable and the young Adolf Brodsky gladly accepted the final dedication, deeply believing in the success of the work. Auer later regretted the missed opportunity and performed the concert with pleasure. Almost three years after its creation, this work was premiered by the Vienna Philharmonic in 1881, led by one of the most famous conductors of his time, Hans Richter, with Brodsky on the violin. Unfortunately, despite the good impression that the violinist left on the audience, the violin concerto was only partially successful. The Viennese critic Eduard Hanslick characterized the composition as long, pretentious, and even occasionally vulgar.

The first movement opens with a theme that would not appear again later. Tchaikovsky applied a similar procedure for the beginning of the first movement of his Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in B minor. The wide scope of the movement gave the composer the opportunity to write a virtuoso solo section and a skillfully treated orchestral part. The

transitions between the movements are composed as harmonic bridges. The melody of the second movement, *canzonette*, is full of lyricism and melancholy in the spirit of the vocal tradition of Russian musical folklore. The finale is a brilliant solo instrument embellishment in the spirit of a Cossack dance, which returns twice to the slow tempo of the second movement. Reminiscences are short-lived with a quick return to the initial virtuosity.

Symphony No. 1 in C major, Op. 21 by **Ludwig van Beethoven** (1770-1827) is dedicated to Gottfried van Swieten, the composer's patron from the period when he was a young artist. Stylistically, the work fully follows the tradition of Beethoven's predecessors, especially J. Haydn and W. A. Mozart, but even in this early work, clear characteristics of Beethoven's unique stylistic expression are noticeable.

Symphony No. 1 was premiered in Vienna in 1800, at a concert that was supposed to present Beethoven as a young and promising artist to the demanding home audience. In music literature, this work is considered as a result of bold and advanced experimentation, which he presented five years after Haydn's last symphony, and twelve years after Mozart's last symphony.

The form was conceived in accordance with the established compositional tradition of that time. The musical content, instrumentation, and tempo, on the other hand, are unusual, if not revolutionary, when it comes to the treatment of symphonic material.

With his first symphony, Beethoven presented himself as a very brave, unique, and advanced symphonic composer, and throughout his professional life he remained faithful to the specific stylistic expression he presented at that time.

Asja Radonjić, M. Sc.