

Belgrade Philharmonic
Season 2021/22
We Have Really Missed You

Friday, April 1, 2022

Gabriel Feltz
Sunwook Kim, piano

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Piano Concerto in B flat Major, No. 27

Allegro
Larghetto
Allegro

Duration: around 32 minutes

Leonard Bernstein
Symphony No. 2, *Age of Anxiety* for piano and orchestra

Part One

The Prologue: Lento moderato
The Seven Ages: Variations 1-7
The Seven Stages: Variations 8-14

Part Two

The Dirge: Largo
The Masque: Extremely Fast
The Epilogue: Adagio - Andante - Con moto

Duration: around 35 minutes

Of all the forms composed by **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart** (1756-1791), his influence and reform was probably the greatest on the concert genre, mostly for works for keyboard instruments (several of the early works were intended exclusively for harpsichord). Writing them primarily for himself as a performer, from his earliest age as a respected child prodigy, Mozart introduced his dramatic potential, most strongly expressed in the field of opera, into his concert works. Of his 27 piano concertos, one of the most popular is his last concerto, in B flat major, K 595, composed in 1791, which he himself premiered in Vienna only a few months later, in his last public appearance. Like his previous two concertos in the same key, K 450 and K 456 from 1784, this one is characterized by a lyrical atmosphere, simplicity and chamber texture. Contrary to tradition, the soloist's section is conceived as an accompaniment in relation to individual orchestral sections that bring the main thematic material. Even when the composer entrusts the piano with the role of leader, other instruments build a complex texture that merges with it. The development part, built in a complex counterpoint sweep, leads to a reprise. The second movement, which exudes simplicity, is richly orchestrated, at the same time giving the soloists the opportunity to demonstrate their skill in shaping the melody. The finale begins with Mozart's original song *Sehnsucht nach dem Frühling* (Longing for Spring), which gained the status of a folk song shortly after it was written. The invention of the theme is masterful, while the rich sound mixes feelings of joy and sorrow.

According to a poem by the British poet Wystan Hugh Auden, *The Age of Anxiety*, **Leonard Bernstein** (1918-1990) composed a work of the same name for solo piano and orchestra in 1948-49, marking it as his *Second Symphony*. He dedicated it to Serge Alexandrovich Koussevitzky, who planned to end his 25-year conducting career in the Boston Symphony Orchestra while the author played the solo section at the premiere.

Although Auden received some of the worst reviews of his career when the poem was published in 1947, it won him a Pulitzer Prize, four editions in a short time, and Bernstein's Symphony also interested choreographer Jerome Robbins for a ballet. Despite their success, the poet did not give them credibility, especially the ballet.

For many, the *Age of Anxiety* was a true portrayal of the cultural state of the 20th century after the end of World War II. For Bernstein, one of the most poignant examples of pure virtuosity in the history of English poetry and a breathtaking work was the basis for a symphony without a symphonic form. Instead of four traditional movements intended exclusively for the orchestra, the composition is divided into two parts with three sections for piano and orchestra, which are performed without a break. The musical content is strictly accompanied by lyrics without the intention of being too programmatic, and the role of the pianist represents the autobiographical protagonist in a difficult and problematic search for faith. The story follows four foreigners who meet in a New York bar during the war and present their views on life in the form of an ancient eclogue (pastoral poetry written in dialogues). The prologue represents the protagonists, the Seven Ages is their conversation about the ages from birth to death, and the Seven Stages is a symbolic search for "prehistoric happiness," both in the form of variations that bring different moods and textures. Lamentation, in a romantic manner, speaks of the loss of life support, the mask is in the form of a scherzo for piano and percussion in jazz style, a picture of a night party with a love story, while through the Epilogue at dawn, everyone ends up happy, returning to everyday life. In a hurry to finish the work, Bernstein finished the last segment three weeks before the premiere, without the role of soloist in it. Dissatisfied with the result, he reworked it in 1965, giving the piano a significant role with the final cadence ahead of the coda.

Danica Maksimović