

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

**Friday, March 11, 2022**

**Mario Venzago**  
**Simon Höfele, trumpet**

**Concert dedicated to the memory of Zoran Đinđić**

**Richard Wagner**  
*A Faust-Overture*

Duration: around 12 minutes

**Robert Schumann**  
*Faust overture, WoO 3*

Duration: around 9 minutes

**Christian Jost**  
*Pietà (In memoriam Чен Бејкер)*

Duration: around 20 minutes

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**Arthur Honegger**  
*Symphonie liturgique*

*Dies irae*  
*De profundis clamavi*  
*Dona nobis pacem*

Duration: around 30 minutes

**Johan Sebastian Bach / Leopold Stokowski (arr.)**  
*Eine feste Burg ist unser Gott*

Duration: around 4 minutes

**Johan Sebastian Bach / Leopold Stokowski (arr.)**  
*Tocatta and Fugue in D Minor, BWV 565*

Duration: around 10 minutes

**Richard Wagner** (1813-1883) originally conceived his *Faust Overture* as the first movement of a symphony based on Goethe's drama. The idea of the symphony, however, was abandoned given that Wagner was busy working at the time on the opera *The Flying Dutchman*. After the original version from 1840, the final version was created in 1855, with this title. The theme is related to Faust himself and deals with the action that preceded the meeting of Mephisto and the acquaintance with Margaret. The work evokes an exceptional introspective image of the protagonist - mental turmoil, hope, and struggle with destiny.

Another composer, Wagner's contemporary, dealt with the theme of Faust. **Robert Schumann** (1810-1856) was inspired by Goethe's work and in 1844 he decided to musically embody the legend of Faust, who made a pact with the devil, exchanging his soul for unlimited knowledge and worldly pleasure. Since Schumann did not want to follow the narrative flow in his work, he replaced the original idea of writing an opera with the idea of fragments that would get their musical transposition. This is how the oratorio *Scenes from Goethe's Faust* was created, and the partially completed work was conducted by Franz Liszt in 1849 on the anniversary of Goethe's birth. At his suggestion, Schumann wrote the overture as the last completed segment of the *Scenes* in 1853. Like Wagner's work of the same name, the overture is a character image of Faust - a gloomy introduction shows the protagonist immersed in his thoughts, followed by the search for ideals and truth, with occasional lyrical episodes that allude to Margaret's character.

**Christian Jost** (1963) is one of the most important German contemporary composers, with a wide-ranging creative opus, including opera, ballet, symphony, and chamber music.

*Pietà* is the last work in Jost's *Requiem Trilogy*, which he began in 2000. Although it was written last, *Pietà* is the first work in the cycle, followed by *Dies Irae* for trombone orchestra and *Lux aeterna* for alto saxophone and orchestra. The works from the trilogy are also performed individually.

Although *Pietà* is not a jazz piece, the subtitle *In memoriam Chet Baker* hints at a basic musical idea. The trumpet enters the field of jazz with Baker's variety and elegance. His heartbreaking life story and tragic death are depicted in a lyrical adagio. This idea extends to the destiny of the entire human race in the following compositions from the trilogy. As a consequence, *Pietà*, due to its nature and specific part of the solo trumpet, is the most intimate part of the cycle.

*Symphonie Liturgique* is the third symphonic achievement of the Swiss-French composer **Arthur Honegger** (1892-1955), created in the twilight years of World War II. The work is conceived in three movements, each of which is named after a liturgical text. The first movement, marked *allegro marcato*, is named *Dies irae*, from the Requiem Mass. The slow movement named *De profundis clamavi* after Psalm 130 is, in contrast, meditative and lyrical. The finale, named *Dona nobis pacem* from the Mass, is more episodic character, with a brutal marching rhythm that builds a dissonant climax before a long, lyrical coda that completes the work.

Honegger himself wrote an extensive commentary on the work, explicitly linking music to the horrors of war, with a desire for peace.

*Symphonie Liturgique* was created in 1945-46 on a commission from the Foundation *Pro Helvetia*, and premiered in Zurich on August 17, 1946 with Charles Munch conducting the Swiss Romande Orchestra. The symphony was a specialty of Herbert von Karajan, whose recording of it is still widely regarded as one of its finest interpretations.

*Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott (A Mighty Fortress is Our God)*, BWV 80 is a chorale cantata for Reformation Day by Johann **Sebastian Bach** (1685-1750). It was reworked from one of his Weimar cantatas, and was most likely created around 1723, after Bach's move to Leipzig. The cantata was scored for four vocal soloists, a four-part choir and a chamber baroque ensemble.

Another of Bach's works, *Tokata and Fugue in D minor, BWV 565*, was written for organ. In addition to contradictions from authorship, the time of its creation is also the subject of musicological debates, and stretches from 1704 to even 1750. Today, it is widely believed that this work is by the author as a young man, and dates between 1704 and 1707. The work survived for a whole century in a manuscript made by Johannes Ringk, and the first edition was published during the Bach Revival era, in the 19th century. It was printed in 1833, and was included in the concert repertoire thanks to Felix Mendelssohn, who performed the work in 1840 and then popularized it further. In the 20th century, one of the greatest conductors of the time, Leopold Stokowski (1882-1977), made a large number of transcriptions of Bach's works for symphony orchestra in the 1920s and 1940s. In addition to organ music, he orchestrated parts of Bach's repertoire for solo violin, piano, as well as parts of the most famous cantatas. *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott* was transcribed in 1933, and *Tokata and Fugue in D minor* in 1927. The transcription of *Tocatta and Fugue in D minor* became known to the widest audience through the famous Disney film *Fantasia*, for which the works were conducted by Stokowski, who himself appears in the film.

Asja Radonjić, M. Sc.