



**bournemouth
symphony orchestra**

Kirill Karabits Chief Conductor

**Concert Programme
Winter/Spring 2022**



Shostakovich's Mighty Concerto

Lighthouse, Poole
Wednesday 27 April

Supported by
Investec

Guildhall, Portsmouth
Thursday 28 April

Scriabin
Rêverie
4'

Shostakovich
Violin Concerto No.1
39'

Interval

Tchaikovsky
Symphony No.4
44'

Alexander Shelley
Conductor

Nikita Boriso-Glebsky
Violin

Amy Merchant
Leader

To help build confidence and protect the players we ask that you wear face masks wherever possible. Please comply with any other Covid safety measures that are in place in the venue.

Please turn off all mobile phones, pagers and watch alarms, ensure that hearing aids are switched to the correct setting, and consider fellow audience members in general regarding noise and the glare from mobile phone screens. The use of cameras, video cameras and recording equipment is strictly prohibited. All information is correct at the time of going to print. All timings are guidelines only and may differ slightly from actual lengths.

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Rêverie

Alexander Scriabin

Born: 6 January 1872 Moscow

Died: 14 April 1915 Moscow

Scriabin composed his *Rêverie*, a beautiful short orchestral piece, in 1898, and when he took the score to his publisher Alexander Beliaev in November that year, both he and his friend Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov were delighted with it. The *Rêverie* is a romantic miniature, concentrated in its expressive intensity while developing a single idea across a five-minute span. By the time he composed this piece Scriabin was an experienced composer of piano music, with a great many miniatures to his credit. However, this *Rêverie* looks forward as well as back, and in many respects anticipates the large-scale and ambitious Symphony No.1 on which he had recently begun working.

Terry Barfoot



Violin Concerto No.1

Dmitry Shostakovich

Born: 25 September 1906 St Petersburg

Died: 9 August 1975 Moscow

1. Nocturne: Moderato
2. Scherzo: Allegro
3. Passacaglia: Andante - Cadenza
4. Burlesque: Allegro con brio

The Violin Concerto No.1 of Shostakovich is unusual in having two designated opus numbers (77 and 99), because the work was withdrawn around the time of the 1948 Congress of Soviet Composers. At this notorious event the major figures of Soviet music – Prokofiev, Khachaturian, Miaskovsky, Shostakovich – were roundly denounced by Stalin's henchman Andrei Zhdanov, since the Party viewed their compositions as examples of 'individualism' and 'bourgeois decadence'. Thus the 77 opus number reflects the date of the composition of the work (1945-8), whilst 99 refers to the date of its premiere and publication. Later, Shostakovich indicated he preferred the original opus number.

It was a full seven years later, two years after Stalin's death, that the premiere of the concerto took place on 7 October 1955 with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Yevgeny Mravinsky. The soloist, and the music's dedicatee, was the legendary David Oistrakh, who had advised Shostakovich on matters relating to violin technique.

The concerto is cast in the key of A minor and its opening movement, titled *Nocturne*, differs from the traditional concerto form, since it is another example of Shostakovich's fondness for a slow and expressively intense movement as the first part of a major composition. At first acquaintance the music may seem rhapsodic, but in fact the development is tightly controlled, using the germinal figure in the lower strings as the basis for most of what follows. An important second theme is played by the soloist, reaching towards the top of the violin's range, and the nature of this largely tranquil movement is introspective and deeply felt.

The second movement *Scherzo* brings a new focus. This is a three-part structure in which orchestra and soloist constantly exchange roles and ideas, particularly during the initial phase for woodwind and violin. There is abundant rhythmic energy, which continues into the central trio section, modelled on Jewish folk dances. The later stages are more than simply a recapitulation, since the composer's motto theme adds an extra dimension and is worked to a brilliant climax. This is the monogram D,S,C,H: Dimitri SHostakowitsch in the German transliteration, forming the notes D, E flat, C, B.

The *Passacaglia* (variations on a recurring theme in the bass) develops around the theme presented by the cellos, double-basses and horns. The eight variations adopt various approaches, building to a climax which releases the contrast of an extended cadenza for the soloist. This in turn moves directly into the finale, titled *Burlesque*, whose lively rhythms bring a new priority. The principal theme is typical of this aspect of the Shostakovich's personality, and equally typical is the way that it becomes the basis for a powerful and vital movement. What is more, the expressive unity is emphasised by the potent return of the *Passacaglia* (third movement) theme.

Terry Barfoot

Interval



Symphony No.4

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Born: 7 May 1840 Kamsko-Votkinsk

Died: 6 November 1893 St Petersburg

1. Andante sostenuto - Moderato con anima
2. Andante in modo di canzona
3. Scherzo: Pizzicato ostinato
4. Finale: Allegro con fuoco

1877 was the most critical year of Tchaikovsky's life: the year of his marriage, his attempted suicide, his separation. It also brought to the fore his extraordinary relationship with his patroness, Nadezhda von Meck, whom he never met face to face. This was the year of the Fourth Symphony, his opus 36, composed between May 1877 and January 1878, and first performed in Moscow on 22 February that year, conducted by Nikolay Rubinstein.

When the symphony was first performed, Tchaikovsky was not there to hear it. Fleeing from his disastrous marriage, he was in Florence, so that news of the rather cool reception the new work received was relayed to him by Madame von Meck. In her letter, she asked if the music had a programme, and Tchaikovsky responded by concocting one, while at the same time reminding her that "composition is a purely lyrical process", which could not satisfactorily be explained in words.

The relationship between composer and patroness was at its closest during these months, she treating him as the ideal artist of her imagination, he treating her as an idealised mother-figure.

In their detailed correspondence the Fourth Symphony occupies a special place, since it is always referred to as 'our symphony' by both parties. Tchaikovsky certainly felt the need to express the stresses of his emotions through his music, and therefore the programme which von Meck extracted from him remains of special interest:

"The introduction is the germ of the whole work. The main idea, first in the trumpets and then in the horns, is suggestive of the idea of Fate, the inevitable power that hampers our search for happiness. This power hangs for ever over our heads, like the sword of Damocles. One has no option but to submit to it. The main theme of the *Allegro* describes feelings of depression and hopelessness. Would it not be better to retire from reality and devote oneself to dreams? The second group of themes introduced by delicate woodwind runs and a light melody for the strings, expresses this dream world; the main theme of the *Allegro* is pushed into the background. Gradually the whole soul is surrounded with dreams. They scatter at last before the harsh theme of Fate. One's whole life is just a perpetual traffic between the grimness of reality and one's fleeting dreams of happiness."

The first movement is the longest and most complex of the four, and is built around the reappearances of the motto theme. Two other themes, a sad waltz first appearing in the strings and a more hopeful idea on the clarinet, form the material which is developed. The movement is a towering symphonic structure, with intellectual organisation and emotional intensity combining as one.

The contrasts are violently opposed but they are superbly integrated; the command of orchestral texture and colour is particularly powerful. The despairing coda brings a feeling of exhaustion, the result of the unrelenting tensions of this magnificent movement.

The second movement's outer parts treat a haunting melody which is presented by the oboe. At the centre, a new idea appears on clarinet and bassoon; it has dance-like characteristics but a certain darkness too. Tchaikovsky is at his most delicate here, with running scales in woodwinds or strings playing a crucial role in the accompaniment.

Throughout the *Scherzo* the strings play pizzicato, a striking effect which is contrasted against the central section, which derives from the combination of a hectic little oboe tune and a quasi military theme on the brass. After the pizzicato has been repeated, all three ideas are ingeniously brought together for the colourful coda.

To introduce the finale it is worth quoting Tchaikovsky's programme once again: "If you can find no joy in yourself, look around you and mingle with the people. See how they enjoy themselves and devote themselves entirely to festivity. But hardly does one forget one's sorrow when untiring Fate announces his presence again. But other people do not take much notice. They are too busy enjoying themselves. Rejoice in the happiness of others, and life remains possible."

At the beginning of the movement a flourish of excitement leads to a folksong, "In the fields there stood a birch". The hectic pace hardly relents, and so the mood imposed by the initial gesture seems pervasive, until the Fate motto interrupts when the celebrations are at their height. Its thundering *fortissimo* leaves a sense of exhaustion and resignation in its wake. Even when the folktune returns, leading to the bombastic conclusion, there is an implied hollowness about the triumph, a gesture that is typical of Tchaikovsky's obsession with Fate.

Terry Barfoot



Alexander Shelley

Conductor

Alexander Shelley performs across six continents with the world's finest orchestras and soloists. A passionate and articulate advocate for the role of music in society, he has spearheaded multiple award-winning and ground-breaking projects unlocking creativity in the next generation and bringing symphonic music to new audiences. Alexander has led thirty-six major world premieres, highly praised cycles of Beethoven, Schumann and Brahms symphonies, operas, ballets, and innovative multi-media productions. He collaborates with artists such as Lang-Lang, Joshua Bell, Daniel Hope, Hélène Grimaud, Itzhak Perlman, Renée Fleming and Thomas Hampson alongside some of the finest orchestras of Europe, the Americas, Asia and Australasia

In September 2015 Shelley succeeded Pinchas Zukerman as Music Director of Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra, the youngest in its history. Together they have undertaken major tours of Canada and Europe, commissioned

ground-breaking projects such as 'Life Reflected' and 'Encount3rs', released multiple JUNO award winning albums and, most recently, responded to the pandemic and social justice issues of the era with the 'NACOLive' and 'UnDisrupted' series. This season they complete a major Schumann/Brahms recording cycle and performed multiple world premieres, including Philip Glass's latest symphony, which they will also tour to Carnegie Hall.

Born in London in October 1979 to celebrated concert pianists, Alexander studied cello and conducting in Germany and first gained widespread attention when he was unanimously awarded first prize at the 2005 Leeds Conductors' Competition. In August 2017 Alexander concluded his eight-year tenure as Chief Conductor of the Nürnberger Symphoniker. As of January 2015, Alexander has served as Principal Associate Conductor of London's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

In 2016 Alexander was awarded the ECHO prize for his second Deutsche Grammophon recording, *Peter and the Wolf*, and both the ECHO and Deutsche Grunderpreis in his capacity as Artistic Director of the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen's 'Zukunftslabor', a visionary project of grass-roots engagement, which uses music as a source for social cohesion and integration. Through his work as Founder and Artistic Director of the Schumann Camerata and their ground-breaking '440Hz' series in Dusseldorf, through his leadership roles in Nuremberg, Bremen and Ottawa, and through his regular tours leading Germany's National Youth Orchestra, inspiring future generations of classical musicians and listeners has always been central to Alexander's work.

In Nuremberg he has, over the course of nine years, hosted more than half a million people at the annual Klassik Open Air concerts - Europe's largest classical music event.



Nikita Borisov-Glebsky

Violin

Nikita Borisov-Glebsky's recording of the recently discovered concerto in D Minor by Eugène Ysaÿe, followed the discovery of the original handwritten score at the Juilliard School. Nikita was invited to record the piece with Orchestre Philharmonique Royal de Liège for the album *A Tribute to Ysaÿe* (2019). The recording was awarded the prestigious Diapason d'Or award.

Nikita's plans for the 21/22 season include performances with the Lahti Symphony Orchestra at the Great Hall of the St. Petersburg Philharmonic; a concert with Boris Berezovsky and the Svetlanov Orchestra, and a debut with the Russian State Youth Symphony Orchestra in Moscow. In the summer of 2022 he will perform all Beethoven quartets at the Suntory Hall in Tokyo.

Among the highlights of the last season there are chamber music concerts with Nikolai Lugansky, Narek Haknazaryan and Maxim Rysanov at the National

Auditorium in Madrid, the Vienna Konzerthaus, the Tchaikovsky Concert Hall and the Mariinsky Theatre Concert Hall; performances with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Emilia Hoving and the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra; and a return to the Zaryadye Hall in Moscow with the Svetlanov Orchestra.

Nikita has recorded an anthology of Nikolai Medtner's works for violin and piano with Ekaterina Derzhavina (Profil, 2018) as well as Symphonie Espagnole with Sinfonia Varsovia and Beethoven Violin Sonata in G Major op. 96, n. 10 with Dana Protopopescu (Queen Elizabeth Competition label, 2021 and 2009).

Nikita Borisov-Glebsky triumphed at the Kreisler Competitions in Vienna and the Sibelius Competition in Helsinki in 2010 (First Prizes) and at the Monte Carlo Violin Masters competition in Monaco in 2013 (Grand Prix).

Nikita is particularly grateful for the Violinist of the Year award he received from the International Maya Plisetskaya and Rodion Shchedrin Foundation (USA), the Virtuoso Prize of the Italian Academy of String Instruments and the Antonio Stradivari Society (Cremona), and the Jan Sibelius Medal from the Sibelius Foundation in Finland. .

He plays the violin created by the Austrian master Martin Schwalb in 2020. The instrument was modeled on the Guarneri del Gesù 'Ole Bull' violin from 1744.

Nikita was born in 1985 in the South-East of Russia in the city of Volgodonsk on the Don River. He graduated from the Moscow State Conservatory with a PhD in violin performance (class of Professor Eduard Grach and Associate Professor Tatiana Berkul) and went on to develop his musicianship under the guidance of Augustin Dumay in Brussels and Anna Chumachenko in Kronberg.

Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra

Championing the role of culture in people's lives



One of the UK's best-loved orchestras, Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra is a professional ensemble known for championing the role of culture in people's lives. With residencies in Bournemouth, Bristol, Exeter, Portsmouth and Poole, it is the largest cultural provider in the South West of England, serving one of the biggest and most diverse regions.

The BSO, under its Chief Conductor Kirill Karabits, is known for pushing artistic boundaries, and its ongoing series of music from former Soviet states, *Voices from the East*, continues to gain praise. Boasting an enviable list of principal conductors, since its founder, Sir Dan Godfrey, including Constantin Silvestri, Sir Charles Groves and Marin Alsop, the BSO has given memorable performances worldwide and is broadcast regularly on BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM.

The Orchestra's inaugural livestreamed series, which featured Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Benjamin Grosvenor and Alina Ibragimova, was widely praised by audiences and critics alike, with the BSO making history as one of the first British orchestras to return to the stage in 2020. In 2021, Horn player Felix Klieser made a memorable UK concerto debut as the BSO's Artist-in-Residence, and the Orchestra resumed its symphonic touring of the South West.

Committed to new music, the BSO celebrates a triptych of contemporary works written by women in 2021/22, with premiere performances of works by Carmen Ho, Franghiz Ali-Zadeh and Elizabeth Ogonek. During the pandemic, the BSO also gave premieres by composers Shirley J. Thompson and Magnus Lindberg.

The BSO was recognised with the Royal Philharmonic Society's Impact Award in 2019 for its work in improving opportunities for disabled musicians, and BSO Resound – the world's first professional disabled-led ensemble at the core of a major orchestra – continues to receive international attention for igniting change. Challenging access to high-quality music for all, the BSO leads hundreds of events each year, from award-winning work in health and care settings to partnerships with schools and music education hubs.

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