



bournemouth
symphony orchestra

Concert Programme
Wednesday 30 November 2022





bournemouth
symphony orchestra



Celebration of Christmas Carols

Traditional Christmas sing-along

Gavin Carr Conductor

Dougie Scarfe Presenter

Bournemouth Symphony Chorus

Bournemouth Symphony Youth Chorus

It just isn't Christmas without our traditional carols sing-along. Join us for a seasonal spread of Yuletide treats and classic carols old and new, including *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*, *O Come All Ye Faithful* and *Good King Wenceslas*. It really is the perfect way to put aside the hassle and usher in Christmas with family and friends.

Chorus carols include *Ding Dong Merrily On High*, John Rutter's *Shepherds' Pipe Carol* and brand new versions of *In The Bleak Midwinter* and *In Dulci Jubilo*.

Friday 23 December 7.30pm Lighthouse, Poole

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Musical Pictures

Lighthouse, Poole

Wednesday 30 November

Supported by
John & Ruth Lang

Rachmaninov

Piano Concerto No.3

39'

Interval

Mussorgsky (arr. Ravel)

Pictures at an Exhibition

30'

Finnegan Downie Dear

Conductor

Vadym Kholodenko

Piano

Amy Merchant

Leader

Sarah Walker

Livestream Presenter

Celebrating 10 years of support





Piano Concerto No.3

Sergei Rachmaninov

Born: 1 April 1873 Oneg, Russia

Died: 28 March 1943 Beverley Hills, USA

1. Allegro ma non tanto
2. Intermezzo: Adagio
3. Finale: Alla breve

Rachmaninov composed his Piano Concerto No.3 in D minor, opus 30, during 1907 in Dresden, whence he had retreated incognito, in order to escape the pressures of his performing duties in St Petersburg and Moscow. Along with its immediate predecessors, the tone poem, *The Isle of the Dead* and the Symphony No.2, this is one of his most important compositions, a large-scale concerto in the traditional three-movement mould, that is utterly typical of his richly romantic expressive language.

Rachmaninov composed the concerto after he had accepted a long-standing invitation to tour the United States as a concert pianist. He therefore conceived the work with himself in mind as soloist, and to this end he practised the piece during the long transatlantic crossing, using a specially made dummy keyboard so as not to disturb the other passengers. The New York premiere in 1909 was triumphantly received, resulting in a second performance in the city, on which occasion the conductor was Gustav Mahler.

With the two concertos of Brahms, Rachmaninov's Third Concerto is perhaps the most technically demanding of all the popular piano concertos. But its musical language is far removed from that of a virtuoso showpiece, since the work has a genuinely symphonic sweep, with the closest possible integration between soloist and orchestra.

The shifting rhythm which will become a pervasive influence is heard first, before the soloist presents the principal theme of the first movement. Of this theme Rachmaninov wrote: "It is borrowed neither from folk song forms nor from church sources. It simply 'wrote itself'. If I had any plan in composing this theme, I was thinking only of sound. I wanted to 'sing' the melody on the piano, as a singer would sing it, and to find a suitable orchestral accompaniment, or rather one that would not muffle this singing."

In truth the theme is deceptive in its simplicity, since it becomes a valuable source for later developments. In the early stages it contrasts most effectively with the more romantic and Russian character of the second subject. Horns and clarinets hint at this before it is given a statement in full orchestral lamentation; and in common with so much other material, its source is a phrase from within the principal theme.

A brief cadenza leads on to further presentations of these ideas, while the formal development section sets out as at the opening, but then treats the rhythmic figurations more fully, reaching a tremendous tutti climax which in turn releases a lyrical transition into the great cadenza. Here Rachmaninov left two alternative versions: most pianists opt for the longer and more technically demanding of these, though both have their merits. There is a short coda, but after these powerful exertions there is no attempt to reach an equal emphasis.

The second movement *Intermezzo* is simpler in form and more introspective in mood. The gloomy introduction leads to a solo flourish and then to one of Rachmaninov's magnificent extended melodies. This theme, first heard on the oboe, dominates the remainder of the movement, although towards the end there is a *scherzando* section abounding in elaborative and decorative passage-work for the soloist. The principal theme returns but its progress is cut short by powerful piano octaves and a loud orchestral crash.

The finale has arrived, and a swift pulse is immediately set by the first subject, whose rhythmic identity is strongly characterised. The second theme has a clear rhythmic identity too, ideally suited to its development treatment, building climaxes through sequences at increasingly higher pitch.

Again this material derives from the work's initial theme. A lighter, *scherzando* section provides some relief, in lieu of more formal development, but a darker atmosphere returns with a restatement of the first movement theme; only the intervention of the rhythmic music of the finale can renew the sense of purpose.

It is with the second finale theme, indeed, that the music sweeps powerfully on to a conclusion as grandly triumphant as any that Rachmaninov conceived.

Terry Barfoot

Interval



Pictures at an Exhibition

Modest Mussorgsky

Born: 21 March 1839 Karevo, Russia

Died: 1881 28 March 1881 St Petersburg

Orchestrated by Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)

1. Promenade
2. Gnomus
3. Promenade
4. The Old Castle
5. Promenade
6. Tuileries
7. Bydlo
8. Promenade
9. The Ballet of the Chicks in their Shells.
10. Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle
11. Promenade
12. The Market Place at Limoges
13. Catacombs - Cum mortuis in lingua mortua
14. The Hut on Fowl's Legs (Baba-Yaga)
15. The Great Gate of Kiev

The generation of Russian composers after Glinka (1804-1857) developed and established Russian nationalism as one of the most potent and vital forces in 19th century music. The group who became known as 'The Five' – Balakirev, Cui, Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin and Mussorgsky – represent one of the most important aspects of this trend.

Mussorgsky joined the army as a young man and was stationed at St Petersburg, which enabled him to make the contacts to develop his musical talents. This he largely did in his spare time, when later he worked as a civil servant. Composing opera became his chief interest, and he aimed to make his music as dramatically truthful as possible. His masterpiece, the historical epic *Boris Godunov* (St Petersburg, 1874), is arguably the greatest of all Russian operas.

Mussorgsky wrote relatively little, largely because alcoholism restricted his creative work and led to his early death at the age of forty-two. Nevertheless, his influence on later composers was enormous, and it is no exaggeration to suggest that much of the operatic music of, for example, Janáček

and Debussy would have been impossible without him.

Nationalism was an extremely potent force in the arts during the second half of the 19th century. It influenced painting and architecture as well as music; and in honour of his achievements, the death of the painter Victor Hartmann in 1873 was followed by a memorial exhibition in St Petersburg.

Mussorgsky, who as a nationalist composer was ever alert to suitable sources of inspiration, attended the Hartmann Memorial Exhibition, and the result was a suite for piano, based upon ten of the paintings, drawings and architectural designs he had seen there. These pictures were quite independent of one another, and were selected almost at random by the composer as a tribute to his friend. The style of the music was of course distinctively Russian, and this is especially apparent in the recurring *Promenade* theme. The work was never performed in the composer's lifetime.

Maurice Ravel made his brilliant orchestration in 1922, at the request of the great Russian conductor Serge Koussevitzky; and since its highly successful first performance, this version of the music has secured a regular position in the international repertoire.

Ravel, however, is by no means the only composer to have been attracted to the task of bringing a new identity to Mussorgsky's piano original.

For example, three other noteworthy figures to have made orchestrations are Henry Wood, Leopold Stokowski and Vladimir Ashkenazy. But against this competition the Ravel version remains dominant. It was first performed on 19 October 1922 by the Orchestra of the Paris Opéra, conducted by Koussevitsky.

The ten musical pictures are sometimes connected, logically enough, by a *Promenade* theme which depicts the composer walking through the gallery. The treatment of this fine theme varies orchestrally in range and colour, just as it did in the piano original.

Promenade The first presentation of the theme has an imposing formality which makes a strong impression; indeed, it is surely one of the most striking of all concert openings.

Gnomus The picture was of a design, in the form of a gnome, for a toy nutcracker. When the music brings him to life, his movements are spasmodic, recalling Ravel's own piano piece, *Le Gibet* from *Gaspard de la Nuit*.

Promenade

The Old Castle A troubadour sings before the castle. Ravel's scoring for the bassoon is a masterstroke, but as the music proceeds the chief melodic interest is in the saxophone, an even more distinctive sound. Muted strings provide an atmospheric background.

Promenade

Tuileries: Children are at play in the famous Parisian park. The description in the score is *Allegretto non troppo, capriccioso*, which means that the music should not be played too quickly, since clear articulation of the subtle rhythms is crucial.

Bydlo This is a Polish cart lumbering along a muddy track, pulled by heavy oxen; the tune is reputed to be an old folk song such as the driver might have sung. Ravel's orchestration evokes the scene wonderfully, with the tuba duly prominent, while the cellos and basses depict first the approach of the cart, and then its disappearance from the scene.

Promenade

The Ballet of the Chicks in their Shells

This is based upon costume designs by Hartmann for a ballet staged at the Bolshoi in 1871. In the original piano version this scherzando movement was extremely effective; in Ravel's cunning hands it is no less so.

Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle

The music contrasts the two characters: a rich Jew in a large fur hat, and a poor Sandomir Jew. First, we hear the pompous theme of Samuel Goldenberg, then the trumpet breathlessly represents the nervous chattering of Schmuyle.

The Market Place at Limoges Although the original painting featured Limoges Cathedral, Mussorgsky decided to concentrate

upon a detail, the animated scene of the market women. Their lively gossip inspired another scherzo, though Ravel's orchestral textures, which include a full complement of percussion instruments, are rather heavier than in the previous movements.

Catacombes This evocation is cast in two parts, 'Roman Sepulchre' and 'With the Dead in their Dead Language'. The solemn opening soon builds to a powerful climax, which then subsides, to be followed by the contrast of eerie music, a response which could hardly be more atmospheric. At one point the *Promenade* theme is heard, now in disguised form.

The Hut on Fowl's Legs According to Russian legend, the witch Baba Yaga flew through the air on a mortar which she also used for grinding human bones. Her supernatural powers inspire music of tremendous rhythmic intensity, affording Ravel an opportunity to display his virtuoso orchestral technique.

The Great Gate of Kiev

Hartmann designed an impressive memorial gate for the entrance to the city, but it was never built because of lack of funds. Mussorgsky creates a vision of a solemn procession passing through the gate, and in Ravel's orchestration this has an impressive and massive grandeur. But musically, the climactic feature comes with the return of the *Promenade* theme, which sets the seal of unity upon the whole remarkable conception.

Terry Barfoot

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Finnegan Downie Dear

Conductor

Finnegan came to international attention in 2020, when he was awarded first prize at the Bamberger Symphoniker's International Mahler Competition. The jury spoke of his "rare combination of open heart and brilliant mind", with "an ability to evoke truly magical moments as if there were nothing more natural to do".

In the 2022/2023 season he will debut at Staatsoper Berlin (Janáček *The Makropulos Case*) as well as working with the Staatskapelle Berlin in concert. He will also debut with orchestras including Camerata Salzburg, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Baltimore Symphony and Tampere Philharmonic, as well as returning to the Gothenburg Symphony Orchestra.

Recent important engagements include the London Philharmonic Orchestra, Sinfonieorchester Basel, Filarmonica di Bologna, Borusan Philharmonic Istanbul and BBC National Orchestra of Wales. In 2021, he returned to Bamberg for subscription concerts with Thomas Hampson.

In future seasons Finnegan will conduct new productions at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, and Theater an der Wien. Previous opera experience includes *Die tote Stadt* at Polish National Opera, *Hänsel und Gretel* at Deutsche Oper am Rhein and Korean National Opera, *Le nozze di Figaro* at Royal Swedish Opera, *Don Giovanni* at Nevill Holt Opera and Gerald Barry's *Alice's Adventures Underground* at the Royal Opera House.

Since 2014 he has been music director of Shadwell - an East London company that works with exceptional young musicians to champion contemporary British repertoire and experiment with new operatic forms. The company's production of Knussen's *Where the Wild Things Are* toured to the Mariinsky Theatre, St Petersburg in 2019; and to Bamberg in 2022 for performances with the Bamberger Symphoniker.

Born in London, Finnegan graduated with distinction from Cambridge University (musicology) and the Royal Academy of Music (piano). He subsequently worked as an assistant to Simone Young, Thomas Adès, Sir Simon Rattle, Daniel Harding and Richard Baker.



Vadym Kholodenko

Piano

Ukrainian pianist Vadym Kholodenko is a multiple-award winning pianist (Van Cliburn Competition, Schubert Competition in Dortmund, Sendai Competition in Japan) was Artist in Residence with the SWR Symphonieorchester performing Fauré, Brahms and Rachmaninov and Beethoven across last season.

His international career has brought him to orchestras in Europe, the USA and Japan. He has worked with conductors such as Vladimir Fedoseyev, Teodor Currentzis, Kirill Karabits, Louis Langrée, Andrey Boreyko, Christian Macelaru, Pinchas Zukerman, Krzysztof Urbanski, Yuri Bashmet, Thomas Søndergård, Ion Marin, Valery Gergiev, Dmitry Slobodeniuk, Lionel Bringuier and Kazuki Yamada in repertoire including concertos by Brahms, Beethoven, Bartók, Scriabin, Rachmaninov and Busoni.

Current concerto engagements include performances with the Danish National Symphony,

Lahti Symphony, Orquestra Sinfónica do Porto Casa da Musica (Busoni), Royal Scottish National Orchestra, BBC National Orchestra of Wales and a tour with Rotterdam Sinfonia including a performance at the Concertgebouw. Other recent engagements have seen Kholodenko perform with the Cincinnati Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, Indianapolis Symphony, BBC Scottish Symphony, RTE National Orchestra of Ireland, Janacek Philharmonic, Filarmonica Toscanini, Orchestre National Bordeaux Aquitaine, Orchestre Philharmonique de Luxembourg.

As a recitalist Kholodenko has performed throughout the United States. Appearances in Europe and beyond include the Vienna Konzerthaus, Wigmore Hall, LSO St Luke's, Liszt Academy Budapest as well as venues in Paris, Moscow, Bilbao, Brussels, Lucerne, as well as Beijing and Singapore and in Japan.

Festival performances include the SWR Schwetzingen Festsspiele, La Roque d'Anthéron and Chopin Festival in Warsaw.

Kholodenko's recordings for Harmonia Mundi include the Grieg Piano Concerto and Saint-Saëns Piano Concerto No.2 which was awarded Editor's Choice in *Gramophone* and the complete cycle of Prokofiev piano concertos. His disc of solo works by Scriabin received a Diapason d'Or de l'année and last season he released two further solo discs of works by Prokofiev and Tchaikovsky. Future plans include works by Chopin and Godovsky and Rzewski's *The People United will Never be Defeated!* for the Quartz label.

Vadym Kholodenko was born in Kyiv from Israeli heritage and gave his first concerts at the age of thirteen in the USA, China, Hungary and Croatia. He studied at the Moscow State Conservatoire under Professor Vera Gornostaeva.



Sarah Walker

Livestream Presenter

Sarah Walker is well known as the presenter of BBC Radio 3's *Sunday Morning*. She also hosts many of Radio 3's *Lunchtime Concerts* from around the world and is a regular contributor to *Record Review*, *In Tune* and the BBC Proms.

Sarah's early career as a piano and keyboard teacher led her to create many volumes of original music for young players, published by Faber Music and ABRSM. She completed a PhD on the subject of English Experimental music, and as a performer has premiered many new British works: her latest album *Haunted Carbonek: the piano music of Martin Pyne* was released during lockdown.

Sarah has been presenting the Orchestra's concerts since the start of its inaugural livestream series in 2020, welcoming audiences from around the globe.



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with an uplifting concert
of marvellous music
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New Year Viennese Gala

New Year on the Danube

Gergely Madaras Conductor
Lajos Sárközy Jr. Violin
Jenő Lisztes Cimbalom

This year's sparkling concert music by the King of Waltz is spiced up with a sprinkling of Hungarian flavour as the waltzes, marches and polkas of Johann Strauss and family are cleverly juxtaposed with the Hungarian Dances and Rhapsodies of Brahms and Liszt. Gergely Madaras studied composition in Budapest and conducting in Vienna. So who better as conductor and informative guide for this musical tour of both capital cities!

Music includes the *Fledermaus Overture*, *Thunder and Lightning Polka*, *Cuckoo Polka*, *Gold and Silver Waltz* and, of course, *The Blue Danube!*

Sunday 1 January, 3pm Lighthouse, Poole
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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, Poole, Portsmouth and Yeovil, it is the largest cultural provider in the South West of England, serving one of the biggest and most diverse regions in the UK.

The Orchestra, 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, including Marin Alsop, the first female principal conductor of a major UK orchestra, the BSO has given memorable performances worldwide and with regular live broadcasts on BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM.

The Orchestra's livestreamed broadcasts have cemented its reputation for presenting live symphonic music of the highest quality and remain popular around the globe following its inaugural season in 2020. In 2022/23, the series features artists Dame Sarah Connolly, James Ehnes, and Laura van der Heijden and a host of the UK's leading music broadcasters. Described by *The Times* as "one of the most inspiring figures on the concert scene today", Horn player Felix Klieser also returns — as the Orchestra's Artist-in-Residence — following a memorable UK concerto debut with the BSO in 2021.

Committed to new music, the BSO has presented premiere performances of works by Carmen Ho, Franghiz Ali-Zadeh, Magnus Lindberg, Elizabeth Ogonek and Shirley J. Thompson OBE in recent years. This season the Orchestra celebrates the work of composer Anna Korsun, who becomes its Composer-in-Residence in 2023.

The BSO also marks a landmark moment when inclusive ensembles BSO Resound and RNS Moves join forces for a new commission by Kate Whitley, with performances in Poole and Gateshead in early 2023. Winner of the 2019 Royal Philharmonic Society's Impact Award, 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 the barriers 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 — and in 2022, the Orchestra welcomed its first community-based Young Associate musicians.

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