

Saturday 22 October 2016
West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge

Symphonic Dances



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Cambridge Philharmonic presents

Mahler: *Totenfeier*

Shostakovich: *Violin Concerto No 1*

Soloist: Matthew Trusler

Interval

Rachmaninov: *Symphonic Dances*

Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra

Conductor: Timothy Redmond

Guest Leader: Miranda Allen

Totenfeier

Symphonic Poem

Gustav Mahler

(1860–1911)



Gustav Mahler

Gustav Mahler was born in what is now the Czech Republic, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He became a conductor and in 1897 was appointed artistic director at the Vienna State Opera, but resigned after ten years to become a freelance conductor. From 1908 to 1911 he conducted the New York Philharmonic. He was increasingly preoccupied with composing, almost exclusively in the genres of symphony and song, although his works were only appreciated by a small number of champions during his life-time.

Many familiar with Mahler's works may not recognise the title of the first piece in tonight's programme. It

is in fact the first version of the opening movement of the second symphony. The symphony itself dates from 1895 but Mahler started work on this first movement in 1888. It would be the first movement of his next symphony and would be entitled *Todtenfeier* (Funeral Rites). Then he changed his mind: it would be a free-standing symphonic poem. (In the process the title lost its 'd' and became *Totenfeier*.) In recent years there has been a greater interest in early versions of works of the romantic repertoire and it has become a concert item. In the same way, the suppressed 'Blumine' movement of his first symphony is often added as an appendix in recordings or performed in its original place in concerts. One thinks also of performances nowadays of first versions of Bruckner's second and third symphonies.

Mahler later changed his mind again and turned it, after all, into the first movement of a symphony. The structure of this symphony would give him problems for years. Eventually it would consist of four more movements: an Andante; a Scherzo which was an orchestral version of one of the songs from *Das Knaben Wunderhorn* which he had composed, *St Anthony preaching to the fishes*; a contralto solo setting of another Wunderhorn song *Urlicht*; and an extraordinary final movement ending with a setting of Klopstock's *Ode* for full chorus.

It was the way in which Mahler stitched together material already composed with that which was new to make his symphonies, ranging from purely orchestral to song and choral movements, which so perplexed and alienated academic musicians in the fifty years after his death. It went against the whole idea of a carefully devised and unified, complete work of art. Only more recently are we happy with the concept of works of art which have multiple versions and juxtapose different genres.

Although later he dropped the idea of a programme he initially wrote of the first movement: "I have named the first movement *Todtenfeier* and, if you want to know, it is the hero of my D Major Symphony [No 1] whom I bear to the grave there, and whose life I catch up, from a higher standpoint, in a pure mirror. At the same time there is the great question: Why do you live? Why do you suffer? Is it all nothing but a huge frightful joke? We must answer these questions if we want to go on living – indeed if we are to go on dying!"

The *Symphonic Poem* consists of one of Mahler's great funeral marches, with the harsh tones and jagged rhythms of the opening funeral march offset by a gentler, more aspiring and pastoral theme in the major key. These two types of music are constantly opposed to each other through all the complex changes of tempo, texture and keys which follow. There is also a brass chorale element which leads to the movement's climax. The end sees the triumph of the pessimism of the funeral march as the movement ends in final collapse and extinction, the hero's coffin being let down into the grave.

The music will be totally familiar to those who know the symphony as the material is almost identical. Mahler added a second harp and set of timpani, two piccolo clarinets and four extra brass. With these resources he ensured a more insistent pulse through the movement, but also a thicker texture. The original has a lighter feel with greater transparency, the sound world being closer to the first movement of the first symphony, whose first performance was taking place just as Mahler was composing *Totenfeier*.

Violin Concerto No 1 ***in A minor, Opus 77***

Dmitri Shostakovich
(1906-1975)

Nocturne – Scherzo – Passacaglia – Burlesque

Dmitri Shostakovich was born in St Petersburg and composed his first symphony in 1925. He composed in a wide range of genres, including ballet and film music. In the 1930s his works started to be attacked for not conforming to the principles of Socialist Realism, but throughout the vicissitudes of the Stalinist period he somehow survived. By the 1960s he



Dmitri Shostakovich (Photo: Ida Kar)

was relatively safe and revered throughout the world for his music.

Shostakovich started this concerto in October 1947 and completed it in March 1948. The first performance with David Oistrakh as soloist, for whom it was written, was not, however, given until 1955. This was due to something that happened whilst the composition was taking place. In February 1948, Zhdanov convened the First Congress of the Composers' Union in Moscow. He used it to condemn 'formalism' in music and, in particular, to attack Shostakovich along with Prokofiev, Khachaturian, Myaskovsky and two others. Zhdanov, who had taken over as Stalin's spokesman on the Arts in

1934, had already led the attack on *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* and the fourth symphony. Now he initiated the post-war attack on the arts known as the 'Zhdanovshchina'. It was not to end until Stalin's death in 1953. By 1955, with Khrushchev about to start 'the thaw', it was safe to perform the concerto. In the meantime Shostakovich had developed a pattern of writing just enough music to appear to be fulfilling the demands of Socialist Realism, mainly through his symphonies (the eleventh and twelfth) and cantatas, whilst channelling his more personal statements into concertos and, above all, his great series of string quartets. Shostakovich wrote five concertos after the Second World War, two for violin, two for cello and a second one for piano.

Tonight's concerto is part of a series of works of this period which show a fascination with Jewish folk music, the others being the song-cycle *From Jewish Folk Poetry*, the fourth string quartet and the Prelude in F sharp minor Op. 87 No 8. The first movement is a nocturne closely related to similar movements in the fourth, fifth and sixth symphonies. It is a seamlessly unfolding soliloquy, with a central episode giving a glimpse of a lighter world, but not to be maintained to the end of the movement, which fades away.

The second movement, a scherzo, has a Jewish idiom. In the second section the composer uses, for the first time, what would become his signature motif: D-Eflat-C-B, this being in German notation D-S-C-H, or Dmitri

SCHostakowitsch. It suggests that Shostakovich is associating himself with the Jews in Russia, a very dangerous act, as he was later to find with the reception of the first movement of his thirteenth symphony with its setting of Yevtushenko's poem *Babi Yar*. This movement feels like a caricature of a Mahlerian scherzo.

The third movement is a passacaglia with fanfare accompaniment, a requiem for the countless victims of Stalin's Russia. It is linked to the last movement by the work's great cadenza. This final movement is marked *Burlesque* and it ends with a repetition of the passacaglia theme. The concerto concludes with an exuberance familiar from the endings of the sixth and ninth symphonies, though now with more than a hint of defiance.

Interval

Symphonic Dances

Opus 45

Sergei Rachmaninov

(1873-1943)

Non allegro – Andante con moto (Tempo di valse) – Lento assai-Allegro vivace



Sergei Rachmaninov

Shostakovich was eleven when the Russian Revolution broke out so there was no question of his leaving Russia. Rachmaninov was in his forties. He had many successful compositions behind him including two symphonies and three piano concertos. He was also an internationally renowned concert pianist. He approved of the reforms brought about by the February Revolution but not of the Bolsheviks and their takeover in October, so he and his family fled overland to Finland and in 1918 settled in the United States. He continued to earn money from performances but composed almost nothing, the only major work being his fourth

piano concerto of 1926, composed partly in New York but also in Dresden. Then in the 1930s he built a summer house for himself in Lucerne and started composing again, including the *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* and the third symphony.

After the outbreak of war he stayed exclusively in the United States and here he composed his *Symphonic Dances*. It was first performed in January 1941 by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra. This was his last composition; he was to die in 1943. It is a symphony in all but name, although it only has three movements. It is sometimes said that Rachmaninov's style never changed after his exile, but this last work has a tauter, more astringent style lacking any of the lush, late Romantic themes familiar from his Russian period. However, it was certainly out of step with the avant-garde world in the United States. John Cage claims that he first met Morton Feldman when attending a New York Philharmonic concert in 1950 to hear a performance of Webern's symphony; they met leaving the hall at the interval to avoid having to listen to the *Symphonic Dances*. The first movement opens with a grotesque march theme, followed by a plaintive melody with a distinctly Russian feel in the central section which is given first to the alto saxophone. Towards the end of the movement there is a quotation of the motto theme from his first symphony. The central movement is a sinister waltz suggestive, it has been said, of a haunted ballroom. The final movement is based on two church chants, the *Dies Irae* in its outer sections, and a Russian chant first heard on the cor anglais. It is the latter that is worked up into an exhilarating coda.

Programme notes: John Harding



Matthew Trusler (violin)



Matthew Trusler has developed a reputation as one of Britain's leading violinists, performing with many of the world's great orchestras, and receiving huge critical acclaim for his diverse recordings. He has also founded the record label Orchid Classics on which some of the most important artists of today are recording, and the Lenny Trusler Children's Foundation, which raises money for desperately ill babies. Trusler was instrumental in forming the Malmo International String Festival, and was in 2012 appointed a director of Delange Artists Management, based in Amsterdam.

Performing on a bow once owned by Heifetz, given to him by Herbert Axelrod (who himself received it from Heifetz), Trusler has received particular acclaim for his performances of works from the 20th century, including concertos by Walton, Berg, Britten and Lindberg. His recording of concertos by Korngold and Rozsa with the Dusseldorf Symphony received 5 stars in BBC Music Magazine, and the headline "Hotter than Heifetz?"

Trusler has been invited to perform as a recitalist and concerto soloist throughout Europe, Australia, the USA, Japan and South Africa. In the UK he has performed with major orchestras including the BBC Symphony, BBC Scottish and BBC Welsh orchestras, the Philharmonia, London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, City of Birmingham, Hallé and Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields. Further afield, he has appeared with the Minnesota Orchestra, NDR Hanover, Helsinki Philharmonic, Deutsche Symphony Berlin, Malaysian Philharmonic, Dusseldorf Tonhalle, Flanders Symfonieorkest and Johannesburg Philharmonic. Some of his personal highlights include his debut at the BBC Proms where he performed the Mathias Violin Concerto with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, tours with the Australian orchestras (including appearances in Perth, Queensland and Tasmania), a tour of Germany with the Academy of St. Martin-in-the-Fields and Sir Neville Marriner, and a tour of Mexico with Martyn Brabbins and the Philharmonia.

Alongside his concerto work Matthew Trusler is an accomplished recitalist and an avid chamber musician who has performed recitals in leading venues around the world including Wigmore Hall, London, Auditorium du Louvre, Paris and Palais des Beaux Arts, Brussels.

Miranda Allen (guest leader)



Miranda is an experienced professional orchestral violinist, playing regularly for orchestras such as the BBC Symphony Orchestra, BBC Concert Orchestra, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, London Philharmonic Orchestra and English National Opera, as well as leading chamber ensembles, recording sessions and touring across the UK, Europe, and worldwide.

Major tours have included the US and European tours of *Star Wars in Concert* and *Sting-Symphonicity*, as sub-principal 1st violin with the Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra.

Miranda considers education to be a major role of any musician's career and for over twelve years she was the strings and violin tutor for National Children's Chamber Orchestra. She continues to tutor for International Music Summer Schools, and is regularly involved with education projects with the BBC, LSO, City of London Sinfonia, and has been a lead tutor for RPO.

After studying at Royal College of Music's Junior Department, Miranda studied at Trinity College of Music, London under the professorship of Clare Thompson and Sophie Langdon, before continuing post-graduate studies with Joshua Epstein at Strasbourg's Conservatoire de Musique. She has also studied with Mark Knight and Joey Corpus in New York.

Timothy Redmond (conductor)



Timothy Redmond conducts and presents concerts throughout Europe. He is Principal Conductor of the Cambridge Philharmonic, Professor of Conducting at the Guildhall School and a regular guest conductor with the London Symphony and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras. He has given concerts in the UK with the Philharmonia, Royal Northern Sinfonia and London Philharmonic Orchestra, with the BBC Concert, Philharmonic and Symphony Orchestras, with the Hallé, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic and Ulster Orchestras, and has

a long-standing association with the Manchester Camerata. He has conducted widely throughout Europe and the US with orchestras including the St Louis Symphony, Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana and the Rotterdam Philharmonic.

Timothy Redmond is well-known as a conductor of contemporary music and has a particular association with the music of Thomas Adès. Since working closely with the composer for the premiere of *The Tempest* at Covent Garden, he has conducted critically-acclaimed productions of *Powder Her Face* for English National Opera, the Royal Opera House and St Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre. He recently gave the Hungarian premiere of *Totentanz* and assisted the composer for the New York premiere of *The Tempest* at the Metropolitan Opera. In the opera house he has conducted productions for Opera Theatre of St Louis, English National Opera, Opera North, English Touring Opera and Almeida Opera, for the Aldeburgh, Bregenz, Buxton, Los Angeles, Tenerife and Wexford festivals and for New York's American Lyric Theatre. As a member of music staff, he has also conducted for De Vlaamse Opera, Strasbourg, Garsington and Glyndebourne.

Recent highlights have included a new disc with Alison Balsom and Guy Barker for Warner Classics, premieres of works by Edward Rushton and Peter Maxwell Davies with the LSO, his debut in China with the RPO and the 2014 LSO BMW Open Air Classics concert, at which he conducted for 10,000 people in Trafalgar Square. This season, as well as conducting concerts with the LSO and RPO, he makes debuts with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, English Chamber Orchestra and Dublin's Crash Ensemble.

Timothy Redmond studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester University and the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena.

Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra

1st Violins

Miranda Allen (guest leader)
Kate Clow (co leader)
Laura Smith
Adele Fryers
Gerry Wimpenny
Chui Yip
Tiago Sebastião
Sean Rock
Rupert Swarbrick
François Guérit
Eleanor Wipenny
Lucy Andrews
Maydo Kay
Charlotte Cunningham

2nd Violins

Naomi Hilton
Emma Lawrence
Anne McAleer
Hilary Crooks
Sarah Ridley
Imogen Poole
Jennifer Stoddart
Viktoria Titmus
Fiona Cunningham
John Richards
Rebecca Forster
Jenny Barna
Lelia Coupe
Ariane Stoop

Violas

Ruth Donnelly
Sophie Channon
Dominic de Cogan
Anne-Cecile Dingwall
Robyn Sorenson
Viola Hay
Jo Holland
Jeremy Harmer
Mari O'Neill
Margaret Scourse

Cellos

Léonie Adams
Jessica Hiscock
Angela Bennett
Anna Edwards
Hartmut Kuhlmann
Helen Davies
Daniel Grace
Clare Gilmour
Melissa Fu
Catherine Alexander-Kiff

Double Bass

Tony Scholl
Susan Sparrow
Stephen Beaumont
John Richens
Sarah Sharrock

Flute

Adrienne Kelly Jackson
Alison Townend
Cynthia Lalli

Oboe

Rachael Dunlop
Camilla Rhodes

Cor Anglais

Katy Shorttle

Clarinet

Graham Dolby
Angela Donnelly
David Hayton

Bass Clarinet

David Hayton

Alto Saxophone

Graham Dolby

Bassoon

Neil Greenham
Jenny Warburton
Tom Moss

Contrabassoon

Tom Moss

Horn

Carole Lewis
Helen Black
Tony Hawkins
George Thackray

Trumpet

Andrew Powlson
Naomi Wrycroft
Laureen Hodge

Trombone

Nick Byers
Denise Hayles

Bass Trombone

Gary Davison

Tuba

George Ellis

Timpani

Dave Ellis

Percussion

Derek Scurl
James Shires
Rosie Bergonzi
Pete Rayner
Dori Raphael

Harp

Bethan Semmens

Piano/Celeste

Tamara Lorenzo Gabeiras



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Saturday 10 December 2016 at 7.30pm
West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge



Falstaff

Verdi

Falstaff

Ford

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Caius

Bardolfo

Pistole

Conductor

Keel Watson

Mark Stone

Michelle Walton

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- Saturday 10 December 2016** *West Road Concert Hall*
Verdi: Falstaff
- Saturday 21 January 2017** *West Road Concert Hall*
Family Concert
So what does a conductor do, anyway?
- Saturday 11 March 2017** *King's College Chapel*
Janáček: Sinfonietta
Brahms: A German Requiem
- Saturday 20 May 2017** *West Road Concert Hall*
Adès: America: A Prophecy
Adams: On the Transmigration of Souls
Ives: Symphony No 2
- Saturday 8 July 2017** *Ely Cathedral*
Parry: I Was Glad
Elgar: The Spirit of England
Strauss: An Alpine Symphony

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