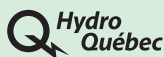


Payare, Liu and the OSM: A Meeting of Minds

Presented by



SATURDAY

1st

AUGUST
7 P.M.

AMPHITHÉÂTRE
FERNAND-LINDSAY

PlacedesArts.com

PROGRAM

KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI

(1933 – 2020)

Sinfonietta n° 1 – 15 min

- I. Arche I
- II. Dynamis I
- III. Dynamis II
- IV. Arche II

SERGUEÏ PROKOFIEV

(1891 – 1953)

Piano Concerto No. 3 in C major, op. 26, 28 min

- I. Andante – Allegro
- II. Tema con variazioni
- III. Allegro, ma non troppo

PIOTR ILITCH TCHAIKOVSKI

(1840 – 1893)

Piano Concerto No. 3 in E-flat
major, op. 75, 17 min

- I. Allegro brillante

SERGUEÏ PROKOFIEV

(1891 – 1953)

Suite scythe, op. 20 – 20 min

- I. The Adoration of Veles and Ala
- II. The Enemy God and the Dance of the Black Spirits
- III. Night
- IV. The Glorious Departure of Lolli and the Cortège of the Sun

INTERMISSION – 20'

ARTISTS

Orchestre symphonique de Montréal

Rafael Payare, conductor

Bruce Liu, piano

PROGRAM NOTES

KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI

Born in Dębica, November 23, 1933; died in Kraków, March 29, 2020

Sinfonietta n° 1 (1992)

The Polish composer Krzysztof Penderecki has ties to Quebec, having been a guest of the OSM on several occasions over the years, notably as conductor for his Polish Requiem in 1998. The Sinfonietta No. 1 is an arrangement for string orchestra of his String Trio of 1991. The work is in two movements: *Allegro molto* and *Vivace*.

In the first movement, the strings hammer out violent, dissonant four-note chords marked *feroce*, before a more lyrical and plaintive solo viola passage, in turn disrupted by the return of the dissonant chords; then an equally tortured violin solo emerges. Further on, a fast section in triplets alternates with very inward *adagio* passages. The second movement, *Vivace*, is built on intervals of a minor third and a semitone, somewhat in the manner of Shostakovich.

SERGEÏ PROKOFIEV

Born in Sontsovka, April 23, 1891; died in Moscow, March 5, 1953

Piano Concerto No. 3 in C major, op. 26

A landmark work by Prokofiev, the Third Concerto was completed in 1921 and, although its first performances met with no success, the work later became one of the most popular in the world repertoire for piano and orchestra. An *Andante* opens the first movement on a dreamy clarinet, then the flutes and strings form a portico for the piano's jovial entrance, in staccato sixteenth notes, in the popular style of Russian dances. The second movement is an *Andantino* with variations, playing on skilful and entertaining transformations of the opening theme of the flutes and clarinets. Prokofiev's antics, his many pirouettes and his unmistakable colours work wonders in each of the five variations, with its writing full of ruptures, its strident passages, its unbridled cascades, all the way to its spectacular hammered octaves, then a dizzying fifth variation and a refined coda taking up the initial theme in an almost airborne mood. The third movement, *Allegro ma non troppo*, is energetic and pastoral, giving the solo bassoon an essential role alongside the piano. The irresistible dynamism of a concerto still beloved by the widest of audiences!

Scythian Suite, op. 20

Prokofiev's *Scythian Suite*, op. 20, is a tale of emulation and failure. When the composer met Serge Diaghilev in 1914 to propose a ballet project, Diaghilev played him the great ballets of Stravinsky (among them *The Rite of Spring*) and of Ravel (*Daphnis et Chloé*). Wanting to rise to the level of his rivals, Prokofiev wrote *Ala and Lolli*, a work for dancing on the subject of the fertility goddess *Ala* and her saviour *Lolli*. But Diaghilev rejected the ballet. Our composer would draw from it these four pieces titled *Scythian Suite*, which caused a scandal in Saint Petersburg at their premiere in 1916, on account of what was seen as the excessive barbarity of this music. Here is a glimpse of these four ballet pages. The *Adoration of Veles and Ala* is in two episodes: a stormy, brutal, highly dissonant surge, then a pastoral section with a flute melody accompanied by piano chords, harp figures and rustling woodwinds, in a ghostly atmosphere. *The Enemy God and the Dance of the Black Spirits* is a wild, heavy, obstinate dance, out of which emerge fanfares in the winds and rapid ascents in the strings and xylophone. The dreamy piece titled *Night* is a poetic evocation in which faint murmurs are accompanied by the celesta, before a more menacing section featuring the bassoon, clarinet and oboe. All of Prokofiev's orchestration talent is on display, with his highly original combinations of timbres. The final piece, *The Glorious Departure of Lolli and the Cortège of the Sun*, is a storm with gusts, irresistible energy and a torrent of pagan dances. The last section is a vast crescendo depicting the rising of the sun and unfurls a phenomenal array of sonorities and timbres that were absolutely new in 1916!

PIOTR ILITCH TCHAIKOVSKI

Born in Votkinsk, May 7, 1840; died in Saint Petersburg, November 6, 1893

Piano Concerto No. 3 in E-flat major, op. 75

The Third Piano Concerto is the last work completed by Tchaikovsky, in 1893, alongside his *Pathétique* Symphony. Too rarely played, this concerto is a rhapsodic and protean work, displaying the Russian composer's gifts as a melodist, but perhaps even more his sense of invention and contrast. A large, free fresco, this opus 75 is original and of remarkable expressive power, alternating episodes of bravura with others that are inward, dreamy or playful, with no systematic scheme, in the manner of a vast improvisation freed from the constraints of form. Tchaikovsky seemed thus to be opening a new path, the very one Rachmaninoff would later take...

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