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Boston University Symphony Orchestra, February 28, 2002

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*Boston University College of Fine Arts
School of Music*

—presents—

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

DAVID HOOSE, *conductor*

YURI and DANA MAZURKEVICH, *violin*

xx

Thursday, February 28, 2002 at 8:00 p.m.
Tsai Performance Center
685 Commonwealth Avenue
Boston, Massachusetts

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

DAVID HOOSE, *conductor*

YURI and DANA MAZURKEVICH, *violin*

Thursday, February 28, 2002

8:00 p.m.

PROGRAM

Prelude and Waltz from Yevgeny Onegin Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Sergey Khanukaev, *conductor*

Concerto Grosso No. 1 (1977)

Alfred Schn. *de*
(1934-1998)

Preludio
Toccata
Recitativo
Cadenza
Rondo
Postludio

Yuri and Dana Mazurkevich, *violin*

— *Intermission* —

L'Oiseau de feu (1910)

Igor Stravinsky
(1882-1971)

Introduction

Tableau I

Kastchei's Enchanted Garden
The Firebird appears, pursued by Prince Ivan
Dance of the Firebird
The Firebird is captured by Prince Ivan
The Firebird's pleading
Appearance of the thirteen enchanted princesses
The princesses play with the golden apples
Prince Ivan suddenly appears

Round dance of the princesses
Daybreak
Prince Ivan enters Kastchei's palace. Fairy carillon
Arrival of Kastchei the Immortal
Dialogue between Kastchei and Prince Ivan
The princesses intercede
The Firebird appears
Dance of Kastchei's court, bewitched by the Firebird
Infernal Dance of Kastchei's subjects
Lullaby
Kastchei awakens
Death of Kastchei

Tableau II

*The palace and creatures of Kastchei disappear. The petrified knights come to life.
General rejoicing.*

This program was prepared with the assistance of Richard Cornell and Amy Lieberman Roberts.

PROGRAM NOTES

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky

Prelude and Waltz from Yevgeny Onegin

Tonight's all-Russian program encapsulates nearly a century's worth of musical and social change, featuring symphonic music from three different genres: opera, dance, and concerto. Each of the featured compositions evokes Russia prior to a structural shift in its modern history, and notably, these pieces are linked by their simultaneous proclamation of, and departure from, Russian nationalism. Aware of the fragile underpinnings of their time in Russian history, Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky, and Schnittke move forward with innovative musical ideas, asserting the possibilities of their great country's future, while still proffering their opulent Russian musical heritage.

Modern audiences tend to associate Tchaikovsky with symphonies and ballets; his reputation stands chiefly as a composer of instrumental music. Yet, Tchaikovsky was inexorably drawn to vocal music; he composed ten operas during his lifetime. Always on the alert for suitable opera librettos, Tchaikovsky confessed, "One must be a hero to refrain from writing operas...I do not possess that heroism." His two greatest operas, *Boris Godunov* and *Yevgeny Onegin*, became pillars of the Russian repertoire and staples of large international opera houses. Tchaikovsky fashioned the scenario of *Onegin* from the poem of the same name by the revered Russian writer Alexander Pushkin. Enjoying the "richness of the poetry, and the simple human subject," Tchaikovsky wrote the bulk of the libretto himself, either reworking Pushkin's lush text or, in many instances, quoting directly from the poem.

In the *Prelude* to the opera, the strings establish Tatiana's motive, a musical idea recurring throughout the opera, always with some association to the character of Tatiana. Tchaikovsky transports us to the Russia soon to be left behind within the *Waltz*. In this scene, the nobility glitters during a festive occasion, but project a blasé concern about their place in a decaying society. Although primarily linked with Vienna, "waltz fever" had swept the European

continent, undergoing slight adaptations in each country. Music historian Hans Fantel has suggested that Russian waltzes, in particular, mix the aromas of "lace and leather — of lavendered gowns and waxed cavalry boots. Fierce passion...always shone through the elegant veneer of Russian society."

Alfred Schnittke

Concerto Grosso No. 1

Schnittke's affinity towards the emotive power of the strings is akin to that of his predecessors, Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich, and many of his pieces feature solo string instruments. The Concerto Grosso No. 1 is the first of six compositions written by Schnittke between 1977 and 1993 bearing this archaic title and following the Baroque form which alternates *concertino* (soloists) and *ripieno* (orchestra.) Gidon Kremer and Tatiana Gindenko co-commissioned the *Concerto Grosso* and were featured soloists in the 1977 world premiere in Leningrad.

Schnittke integrates an eclectic mix of musical styles and techniques into this work, crafting a polystylism in league with his other compositions of this period. In this concerto, he encapsulates his stylistic borrowings into three "musical spheres" that he identifies as "formulas and forms of Baroque music; free chromaticisms and micro-intervals; and banal popular music which eras it were (sic) from the outside with a disruptive effect." After the mysterious introduction played by the prepared piano, the two solo violins introduce the basic motivic cell of the piece from which all ensuing material emanates. From this, Schnittke devises a series of musical gestures, many of which employ quotation, a favorite device of his.

As the Soviet heir-apparent to Shostakovich, Schnittke maintained the older composer's predilection toward imbuing music with irony and a sense of alienation. Ever droll in his commentary, Schnittke explained the edgy appeal of his music, "One of my life goals is to overcome the gap between "E" (*Ernstmusik*, serious music) and "U" (*Unterhaltung*, music for entertainment) even if I break my neck..." In the *Concerto Grosso*, Schnittke reveals glimpses of contemporary Soviet life through his witty use of nationalist elements that firmly establish his connection to music of nineteenth-century Russia. The composer gleefully points to the inclusion of "my grandmother's favorite tango played by my great-grandmother on a harpsichord" as just one of his playful polystylistic juxtapositions included in the *Concerto*. The *Toccata* opens following an archetypical Baroque organ model, but suddenly veers toward a nostalgia-filled Romantic serenade, albeit atonal. His use of "U" music also includes quotations from his score for the cartoon *Butterfly* and later, in the *Rondo*, the transformation of a snippet of a cheerful Soviet children's song into the climax of the piece. Schnittke's clever disregard for the distinction between popular and art music captivates both general audiences and advocates of new music.

Igor Stravinsky

L'Oiseau de feu

Serge Diaghilev was searching for a new work based on a Russian subject for his revolutionary company, the *Ballets Russes* of Paris. He invited the radical choreographer Michael Fokine to devise a scenario based on the popular legend of the Firebird, to which Fokine added concepts and characters from other sources, including Kastchei, the legendary immortal monster, and the twelve dancing princesses of Grimm's fairy tales. Diaghilev first offered the ballet to

the composer Tcherpnin and then to Lydadov, both of whom refused. Stravinsky, just twenty-seven years old, had been maneuvering for this new appointment, and confident of his abilities, began composing *The Firebird* even before he received the commission. His ego was not affronted by being 'third choice.

The story begins with Ivan-Tsarevitch drifting into Kastchei's enchanted woods and watching the Firebird pluck a golden apple from a magic tree. He captures the bird, who begs for her life. Ivan accedes, and the Firebird rewards him with a magical feather. Twelve maidens dance before the concealed Ivan, but flee with the appearance of the dreaded Kastchei and his demons. Ivan fights off Kastchei by waving the feather, while the Firebird leads the demons in a frenzied dance. When Kastchei and his demons fall into an exhausted sleep, the Firebird guides Ivan to a basket containing an egg which harbors the soul of the immortal Kastchei. Ivan causes Kastchei's death by deliberately dropping the egg. The Princesses are freed and acclaim Ivan as their savior.

Eager for success, the young Stravinsky submitted to the demands of Fokine, who mimed passages of the scenario while Stravinsky improvised an extemporaneous accompaniment at the piano. Stravinsky admitted that as he composed to Fokine's physicalizations, he relied upon principles of Wagner's operatic dramas, thus imbuing the score with *leit-musique*. Following the tradition of Russian opera rather than that of Russian classical ballet, Stravinsky tells the story by alternating recitative and aria-like sections. Like Rimsky-Korsakov, he represents magical elements with highly chromatic sections. Stravinsky contrasts these passages with the 'diatonic world' of the human characters, Ivan-Tsarevich, and the Princesses. When humans confront magical characters, the resulting clashes between diatonicism and chromaticism intensify the drama.

The success of *The Firebird's* premiere at the Paris Opera on June 25, 1910 catapulted Stravinsky to international celebrity status. The multifarious reception of the ballet irrationally either placed Stravinsky at the front of "new music" or acknowledged his strong ties to old Russia. The West generally hailed Stravinsky as the representative of a new Russian school, a neo-nationalist. Nevertheless, Ravel praised the ballet as a "taste of the avant-garde."

—Karen Ruymann

THE CONDUCTORS

David Hoose is Director of Orchestral Activities at the Boston University School of Music and is music director of three distinguished organizations: the Cantata Singers & Ensemble, Collage New Music (both of Boston), and the Tallahassee Symphony Orchestra. He has appeared as guest conductor of the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Utah Symphony Orchestra, Korean Broadcasting System Symphony Orchestra (KBS), Orchestra Regionale Toscana (Italy), Boston Symphony Chamber Players, Handel & Haydn Society, and the June Opera Festival of New Jersey. Mr. Hoose has conducted the American-Soviet Festival Orchestra, Emmanuel Chamber Orchestra, Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra, Back Bay Chorale, Chorus Pro Musica, Quad City Symphony, Ann Arbor Symphony, and Cayuga Chamber Orchestra, as well as at the New Hampshire, Warebrook, and Tanglewood Music Festivals. He has also been a guest conductor at the Eastman School of Music, the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, the University of Southern California School of Music, and the New England Conservatory.

Mr. Hoose has been a recipient of the ASCAP Chorus America Award for Adventurous Programming (with the Cantata Singers & Ensemble), has been recognized as Musician of the Year by the Boston Globe, and has received, as a member of the Emmanuel Wind Quintet, the Walter Naumburg Award for Chamber Music. As a conducting fellowship student at the Tanglewood Music Center, he was a recipient of the Dmitri Mitropoulos Award. Mr. Hoose's recordings appear on the Koch, Nonesuch, Delos, CRI, GunMar, and New World labels.

Sergey Khanukaev received his Ph.D. in music theory from the Moscow Gnessin Music Institute and his M.A. with Honors in Symphonic and Operatic Conducting from the St. Petersburg State Conservatory. He has had diverse experience conducting ballets, operas, and symphonic orchestras. His notable symphonic appearances have been with the Jerusalem Symphony, the Haifa Symphony, and the Latvian Philharmonic Chamber orchestras. He is currently the Music Director of the Israel "Classica" Orchestra. Dr. Khanukaev has received numerous awards including the special scholarship for Outstanding New Immigrant Musicians of the Israeli Ministry of Absorption and special prize in the Austrian International Course for Conductors. He has several recordings extant on the Israel Broadcast Authority.

Dr. Khanukaev is currently enrolled in the Doctoral of Musical Arts Orchestral Conducting program at Boston University School for the Arts where he studies with David Hoose.

THE ARTISTS

Dana and Yuri Mazurkevich are outstanding representatives of the Russian violin school. They met at the Moscow Conservatory where they were both students of the renowned David Oistrakh. The Mazurkeviches were faculty members of the Kiev Conservatory, and performed extensively as soloists and as a duo within the USSR and abroad. While living in the Soviet Union, Dana Mazurkevich won prizes in the J.S. Bach International Competition and the George Enesco Violin Competition. Yuri Mazurkevich received his Laureate Diplomas in Helsinki, Munich and Montreal. In 1975 the Mazurkeviches emigrated from the Soviet Union to Canada, where they joined the music faculty at the University of Western Ontario. In 1985, Yuri was appointed Professor of violin at Boston University and was Chairman of the String Department from 1986 to 1995. Dana teaches violin at Boston University and the Longy School of Music.

The Mazurkeviches have performed and taught at the Johannesen International School of the Arts in Victoria, British Columbia, the Banff Center of the Arts, and the Boston University Tanglewood Institute. Since their move to the West, the Mazurkeviches have presented highly successful debuts as a violin duo and soloists in Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, France, Italy, England, Australia, Japan, Taiwan, Hong-Kong, the People's Republic of China, Singapore, Thailand, Mexico and Brazil.

The Mazurkevich Violin Duo has made many radio and television performances for the BBC, CBC, ABC (Australia), Radio France, Radio Moscow and Sender Frieis Berlin among others. Both artists have recorded on the Melodya, Masters of the Bow, and S.N.E. labels.

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8 p.m.

Faculty-Guest Artists Concert
Concordia String Trio
Tsai Performance Center

Thursday, March 14
8 p.m.

Faculty Concert
Maria Clodes-Jaguaribe, piano
Tsai Performance Center

Monday, March 18
8 p.m.

Faculty Concert
Jules Eskin, cello
Ethan Sloane, clarinet
Virginia Eskin, guest artist, piano
Tsai Performance Center

Wednesday, March 20
8 p.m.

ALEA III
Theodore Antoniou, *director*
Tsai Performance Center

Tuesday, March 26
8 p.m.

Boston University Chamber Orchestra
David Hoose, *Orchestral Director*
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Tuesday, April 2
8 p.m.

Richmond Piano Competition Winner
Toma Popovici, piano
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