



Glasgow
Orchestral
Society

FREE



FOUR LAST SONGS

STRAUSS

THE FORCE OF DESTINY
OVERTURE

VERDI

SYMPHONY No.4
BRUCKNER

CONDUCTOR ROBERT BAXTER
SOPRANO MARIA KOZLOVA

SUN 21 MAY 2017 7.30 PM

ROYAL CONSERVATOIRE OF SCOTLAND



WELCOME TO THE FINAL CONCERT OF OUR 2016-17 SEASON

GLASGOW ORCHESTRAL SOCIETY

This is the final concert of the season and our first with Robert Baxter conducting. We have been working very hard in rehearsals with him and have really enjoyed preparing this programme. Now we're looking forward to performing for you tonight. Maria Kozlova joins us as soprano soloist and we've been bowled over by her lovely voice as we've rehearsed the Four Last Songs by Richard Strauss. We know you are going to enjoy it too!

As this is the last concert of the season, we hope you will stay behind for a while at the end to join us in the Café-Bar and meet the orchestra, before we head off for the summer break.

Thank you to everyone who supports Glasgow Orchestral Society in whatever way – for your support tonight, and throughout the year. If this is your first visit to one of our concerts, we hope you enjoyed it and that we'll see you again.

Please make a note in your diaries for the first concert of the new season which will be here in the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland on Sunday 29 October.

In the meantime, have a great summer!

Ann Westwood, President

ROBERT BAXTER

Robert Baxter is a graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland where he studied trumpet. Since graduating he has, and continues to perform regularly with all the professional orchestras in Scotland. Further afield he works with the Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Singapore Symphony Orchestra, Manchester Camerata, New London Consort and the Tenerife Symphony Orchestra. He is lucky enough to have played for conductors such as Abbado, Gergiev and Temirkanov to mention a few.

He studied conducting with Ian Volkov and Kristian Kluttig and since then has

conducted the Lithuanian State Symphony Orchestra and has been MD for the film composer Craig Armstrong in an evening of the composer's music in Glasgow. He has also been MD for the Scottish Concert Orchestra conducting for Belle and Sebastian in the SSE Hydro and for Celtic Connections in a televised concert from the Glasgow Royal Concert Hall with the Chieftains, Eddie Reader and Kris Kristofferson.

He is Musical Director for the Dunbartonshire Concert Band and the Helensburgh Orchestral Society where apart from numerous concerts he has commissioned and performed new works, toured



and recorded CDs. He conducts regularly for many regional youth orchestras and has also been course director for NYOS Spring Academy as well conducting for NYOS Juniors.

He has been guest conductor for the Dunblane Chamber Orchestra, Amicus and is delighted to conduct the GOS tonight.

He enjoys teaching trumpet and taking performance classes at the RCS Juniors and at the Music School of Douglas Academy.

MARIA KOZLOVA

Maria Kozlova graduated in choral conducting from the St. Petersburg State conservatoire, then studied under Patricia Hay in the RCS' Alexander Gibson Opera School, attaining her Master of Opera degree with distinction. During her time at RCS she gave several lunchtime recitals in Stevenson Hall and won

the Tony and Tania Webster prize for Russian Song and Ye Cronies Opera Award. The majority of funding for her studies was granted by the Dewar Arts Awards. Maria later graduated, with an MA in Advanced Vocal Studies (Distinction), from the Welsh International Academy of Voice (WIAV) in Cardiff where she studied with Denis O'Neill.

Maria's operatic credits include Tatyana in Eugene Onegin with Bury Court Opera and Southbank Sinfonia in Ischia, Italy; Lady Macbeth's Lady-in-Waiting in Macbeth (cover) Glyndebourne Festival Opera; Tatyana (cover) in

Eugene Onegin Grange Park Opera; Natasha Rostova in the world premiere of the original version of Prokofiev's War and Peace; Nicolette, L'amour de trois oranges and Tatyana, Eugene Onegin: all in a collaboration between the RCS and Scottish Opera at Glasgow's Theatre Royal and Edinburgh Festival Theatre. Her repertoire also includes Mimi, La Bohème, Micaela, Carmen, Antonia, Les Contes d'Hoffmann and Blanche, Dialogues des Carmélites. She appeared in Opera Galas at the Aberdeen International Music Festival and at Clonter Opera, performing a number of excerpts from major repertoire.



GIUSEPPE VERDI (1813 – 1901) OVERTURE TO *THE FORCE OF DESTINY*

Verdi had an on-off relationship with the operatic overture, sometimes providing only a short prelude for his operas or even doing without one. *The Force of Destiny* is a powerful drama with a political backdrop, originally written for, and first performed at, the Bolshoi in St. Petersburg in 1862 when it had but a short opener. Revisions over several years as it was taken up by Western opera houses included addition of the well known overture in 1869. This stirring piece has justly acquired a life of its own in the concert hall.

RICHARD STRAUSS (1864 – 1949) FOUR LAST SONGS (1948)

Frühling (Spring)

September

Beim Schlafengehen (Going to sleep)
poems by Hermann Hesse (1877 – 1962)

Im Abendrot (Sunset) poem by Joseph von Eichendorff (1788 – 1857)

Strauss could be supremely confident and yet self-deprecating (he once said “I am a first-rate second-rate composer”). Coming to prominence in the late romantic period of the 1890s he could still produce music in this idiom half a century later. By then the other great late romantic, Rachmaninov, and the great modernist Bartók had both died and Sibelius had been largely silent for twenty years. Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Shostakovich and Prokofiev were all major figures and Messaien was writing his *Turangalila Symphony*. But in his mid 80s, Strauss produced this suite of orchestral songs, completed in May to September 1948 at Pontresina and Montreux in Switzerland, where he and his wife were staying to escape the privations of postwar

Germany. Always careful in selecting texts, Strauss was deeply interested in the history of German culture, and aware of his own place in it. Almost unknown in the anglophone world, Eichendorff is a major figure in early 19th century German literature. A gift from a friend of a book of poems by Hermann Hesse, 1946 Nobel Literature Prize laureate, triggered the setting of the three further poems. (Hesse’s novels *Steppenwolf*, *Siddartha* and the peculiar *The Glass Bead Game* later enjoyed a vogue in English translation). Only after his death, Kirsten Flagstad (Strauss’s designated soloist), Furtwängler and the Philharmonia Orchestra, introduced the songs in 1950. A London première was fitting: Ernst Roth, Strauss’s editor at Boosey and Hawkes, and Beecham had arranged a Strauss Festival in October 1947, the old man’s last travel outwith the continent and his last conducting engagements.

The *Four Last Songs* express a deep sense of contentment and resignation at the end of a long life with orchestration to reflect an autumnal glow. Frau Strauss had been a famous soprano in her day and the songs are a late tribute to her voice. Franz Strauss, the composer’s father, was a leading horn player and there is a poignant horn solo at the close of *September*. Additional magical touches are the way in which the solo violin replaces the vocal line in the central section of *Going to sleep* and the piccolos echo the sound of two songbirds flying away at the end of *Sunset*. Also in this last, after the words “can this be death?” there is a quotation from his early tone poem *Death and Transfiguration* (1889), perhaps symbolically to bring things full circle. Indeed, in his final decline, Strauss is reputed to have said to his daughter-in-law “it’s just as I imagined it in *Death and Transfiguration*”.

INTERVAL

ANTON BRUCKNER (1824 – 1896)

SYMPHONY NO. 4 IN E FLAT *“THE ROMANTIC”*

(1881 VERSION, ed. HAAS)

Bewegt, nicht zu schnell (with movement, not too fast)

Andante, quasi allegretto

Scherzo. Bewegt (with movement) – Trio:
Nicht zu schnell (not too fast)

Finale: Bewegt, doch nicht zu schnell
(with movement, but not too fast)

Three strands interwove in the career of Anton Bruckner. He was a renowned organist. Particularly as an improviser, he performed internationally, often on then new instruments such as those of the Royal Albert Hall and the Crystal Palace in London. Well into his thirties, he undertook an intensive study of counterpoint (with Simon Sechter the distinguished theorist who had taught Schubert in his last months). This enabled him to obtain a teaching position at the Vienna Conservatory where he was appreciated particularly by more progressive students such as Hugo Wolf. Finally, as a composer he is remembered for his ten complete symphonies (two unnumbered, plus numbers 1 – 8) and the unfinished 9th. Though he had composed liturgical music for the Catholic church, in mid career he decided his musical destiny was to concentrate on the symphony (in spite of revering both Liszt and Wagner who of course had abandoned symphonic form). Somewhat deferential in nature, Bruckner nevertheless pursued his compositional path relentlessly, usually starting a new symphony as soon as one was completed. But he often made revisions after a first version and also was sometimes pressured by pupils and friends to amend symphonies to make performance more practical. Worse, after his death editions appeared with (well intended) cuts and re-orchestrations. The

editor Robert Haas in the 1930s and 40s produced editions shorn of spurious changes but tended to conflate different versions. His successor Leopold Nowak accepted that there are distinct alternative versions of some works, notably the fourth and the massive eighth symphony. More recent scholars continue the research and discussion.

Bruckner worked on the fourth symphony from 1874–1888, replacing the last movement twice and the scherzo once, as well as refining the first two movements. Detail need not concern us here but suffice to say that tonight we perform the most popular Haas version of one of his best loved symphonies. The title “Romantic” is the composer’s. This symphony takes around an hour to play and what the listener new to Bruckner needs to know is that this music, particularly the outer movements, is often based on slow build-up to a series of climaxes. There are always slowly shifting harmonies underpinning this tendency and he uses a small number of thematic groups. He also had a distinctive approach to rhythm, contrasting duple and triple rhythms (even in the same bar). A particular feature of the fourth symphony is that the tempi of the first, second and final movements are not drastically different, but all encompass internal tempo fluctuations. Contrast is provided by changing key to the relative C minor for the second movement, an *Andante* as in Schubert’s Great C Major symphony, rather than a true slow movement. The thrilling scherzo which follows is in another related key, B flat. This has a slow Austrian *ländler* as its short central trio. The steady tread opening the finale renews the searching quality heard in the first movement. After a varied series of climaxes and more relaxed lyrical episodes it resolves triumphantly, recalling the first movement main theme.

Alastair Whitelaw, May 2017

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VIOLIN I

Aaron Jamison ^{LEADER}
Claire Gilson ^
Katharine Muir
Meg Munck
Christine Paterson
Maureen Quinn
Mary Sinclair
Laura Stewart
Lynsey Stewart
Maria Taheny
Anne Thomson
Chris Upson

VIOLIN II

Lindsay Pell*
Barbara De La Rue
Michelle Diamond
Donald Gibson
Morag Greig
Jenny Jamison
Alan Laing ^
Nicky MacEwan
Julie Murray
Karen Ratcliffe
John Riches
Liz Sime
Pat Woodcock

VIOLA

Lynne Anderson*
Martin Buchan
Robert Fee
Frances Goldman
Christine Johnston
Chris Lennox
Sue Mathers
Sheila Nicol
Stephen Barnett

CELLO

Sarah Moyes*
Ben Denton-Cardeu
Amy Maclean
Nena Riches
Priscilla Routley ^
Alayne Swanson
Alastair Whitelaw

DOUBLE BASS

Ann Westwood*
Ari Loughlin
Julie McCullagh
Ian McTier ^
Ros Micklem ^

FLUTE

Lorna McTier*
Simon Dennis
Pauline Vallance ^

PICCOLO

Simon Dennis*
Lorna McTier

OBOE

Anne Chalmers*
Alison Simpson
Sylvia Wight ^

COR ANGLAIS

Alison Simpson*

CLARINET

Judith Mitchell*
Janice Clark ^

BASS CLARINET

Robert Neil*

BASSOON

Stephanie Dancer*
Nicky Moyes

CONTRA BASSOON

Elise Whitley ^

HORN

Gail Graham*
Michael Barr ^
Tom Ferguson
Fiona Sim
Samantha Wright ^

TRUMPET

Allan McPhee*
Fergus Duncanson
Iain Muirhead ^

TROMBONE

Angus McIntyre*
Marion Brackpool ^

BASS TROMBONE

Keith Anderson*

TUBA

Mark Davis

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^ Guest player

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THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING US THIS SEASON.

Please join us after the concert tonight in the Café-Bar which will be open until 10.30pm. If we don't see you there, we hope to see you again after the summer.

Our next two concerts are:

Sunday 29 October 2017

RCS Stevenson Hall, 7.30pm
Conductor Chris Swaffer

Sibelius *Karelia Suite*

Korngold *Violin Concerto*

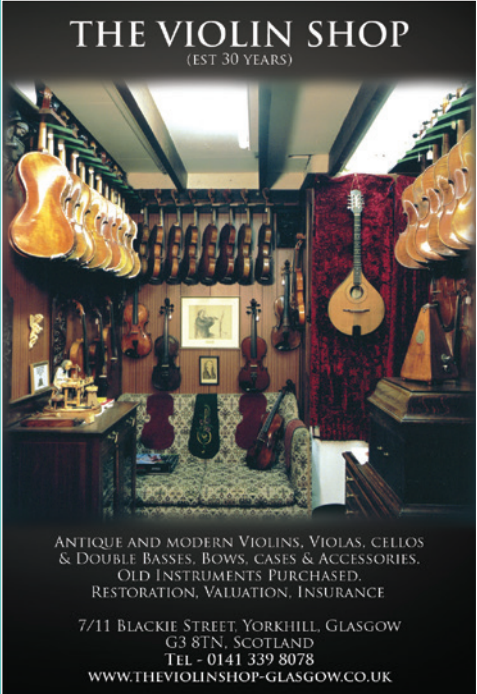
Solo violin Daniel Mate Metzoly

Brahms *Symphony no. 2*

Sunday 10 December 2017

RSNO Centre, 7.30pm
Conductor Chris Swaffer

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