NB. This collection copies varied notes from different ALTO discs (and in a different order to original issues), therefore there will inevitably be duplication in various notes with reference to Tchaikovsky's life where significant personal events had more impact on his composing than perhaps with any other great composer. This will be especially evident where certain events inspired several different pieces. We apologise for some of the duplication about his life, but we also wanted to credit different writers properly for their own contributions by showing in full what each wrote.

Artists are noted with each work, and all summarised at the end (one biography each)

Large Symphony Orchestra of the Ministry of Culture, Russian Federation / Gennadi Rozhdestvensky

At the time of its composition in the summer of 1872 Tchaikovsky (1840-93) held his ***Symphony No.2 in C minor*** in high regard: 'my best work' he told his brother Modest, and this high opinion was undoubtedly reinforced on 7 January 1873 when he played its finale at the piano to a group of colleagues at the house of Rimsky-Korsakov. They were equally enthusiastic and Rimsky-Korsakov's wife tearfully entreated him to arrange it for piano duet. Nikolay Rubinstein (1835–81) successfully presented the symphony's premiere in Moscow exactly one month later at a Russian Musical Society concert, repeating the work on 8 April. At the second hearing Tchaikovsky was summoned to the stage after each movement and presented with a laurel wreath and a goblet.

Tchaikovsky however frequently became less enamoured of his compositions as time went on, and some years later (1879-80) he revised the symphony, making the most extensive alterations to the opening movement. Not everyone was convinced that the changes were for the better: fellow composer Sergey Taneyev (1856–1915) wrote in 1898 to the composer's brother Modest: 'God, what a difference! How good the original *Allegro* is, despite a few imperfections – rambling modulations which can be easily changed, a lovely first theme, a graceful second theme. Next to this the new Allegro is really weak....When I next see you I shall play you both and am certain that you will agree that the first version is the best'. Opinion remains divided although musicologists have tended to disagree with Taneyev.

For the second movement Tchaikovsky recycled a wedding march he had previously composed for his opera *Undine* in 1869, a work rejected for production by the management in St Petersburg. This instantly memorable tune was criticised by César Cui (1835–1918) as being 'rough and commonplace'. Cui was a member of *Moguchaya kuchka* or The Mighty Handful, a group of nationalist composers consisting of Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov, Mussorgsky, Borodin and Cui himself, who rarely praised new compositions by those outside the group. The central section of this movement owes its source to a Russian folk tune *Spin, oh my spinner*, part of a collection familiar to Tchaikovsky. The lively scherzo movement, particularly the rustic middle section, again gives the impression of being based on Russian folk tunes. The final movement, a truly virtuosic set of variations on the well-known Ukranian song *The Crane*, led to the *Symphony No.2* being given the nicknames 'Little Russian' and 'Ukranian'.

Tchaikovsky began composing ***Symphony No.3 in D Major*** at Usovo (Tambov province), the estate of his wealthy pupil Vladimir Shilovsky (1852-93) during the summer of 1875. Shilovsky, never in good health, had frequently pestered Tchaikovsky to accompany him to various European spa resorts which he did in 1868, 1870 and 1873. As well as giving the composer some financial security, Shilovsky allowed Tchaikovsky to make the estate his own for five consecutive summers. Tchaikovsky worked better when alone, and by 1875 had begun to tire of Shilovsky's company; yet he had the grace to demonstrate his gratitude to his wealthy friend by dedicating the new symphony to him. Tchaikovsky much admired Schumann's *Rhenish Symphony* and he similarly set his *Third Symphony* in five movements, two lighter movements flanking the central *Andante elegiaco*.

Despite a letter in which Tchaikovsky states that he was 'taking (the composition of the new symphony) steadily, not spending all (his) time at it, and taking long walks' (letter to Alexei and Mikhail Sofronov, 19 June 1875), he had finished sketching the symphony on 20 June, just 15 days after beginning the work. He then left Usovo and, as a guest of Nikolai Kondratiev, began scoring the piece in Nizy. Having orchestrated the fourth and fifth movements inside a week he then moved to Verbovka, his sister's home. Despite the potentially distracting presence there of his sister's young children, Tchaikovsky always found it restful: he had not only completed the scoring of the entire symphony by the beginning of August but had also commenced work on *Swan Lake*, commissioned earlier that year.

The *Third Symphony* was given its first performance in Moscow under the baton of Nikolay Rubinstein on 7 November 1875. The Russian Musical Society and Rubinstein had bought the rights to perform the premiere but Tchaikovsky must have been nervous about Rubinstein's participation: the preceding December he had shown the esteemed conductor the score of his *First Piano Concerto* and Rubinstein had been scathing in his critique. The response to the *Third Symphony* at its premiere was, on the whole, promising although Tchaikovsky showed some dissatisfaction over the performance itself, feeling that the orchestra should have played better given the rehearsal time. He was critical of the lack of musical ideas (a view since shared by many others) but he also considered the piece - in particular the first three movements - a step forward from his previous symphonies.

The symphony was repeated in January of the following year in St Petersburg under Eduard Nápravník. On this occasion Tchaikovsky was far more satisfied and wrote to his brother Modest that the symphony 'fared very well…I was called for and roundly applauded'. Hermann Laroche, a critic present at the St Petersburg performance wrote positively about the new symphony: 'The importance and power of the music, the beauty and variety of forms, the nobility of style, the original and rare perfection of technique, all contribute to make this symphony one of the most remarkable works produced during the last 10 years. Were it to be played in any musical centre in Germany, it would raise the name of this Russian musician to a level with the most famous symphonic composers of the day.' The first performance outside Russian borders took place in New York in February 1879 although it was not heard in London during the composer's lifetime. It was first performed there in 1899 under Sir August Manns at the Crystal Palace when it was apparently given its nickname *Polish*, after the *Tempo di polacca* finale. It is generally considered that this nickname is rather misleading, since, apart from a nod towards the Weber of *Invitation to the Dance* in its *Alla Tedesca* movement, the symphony as a whole is typically Russian in character. Tchaikovsky borrowed from an earlier work *Cantata for the Opening of the Polytechnic Exhibition* (1872) for his scherzo movement. Some years later he recycled part of the second movement for use in his incidental music to *Hamlet*.

Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra / Yevgeni Mravinsky

Shortly after the premiere of *Marche Slave* in 1876, Tchaikovsky began corresponding with a rich patron of the arts, Nadezhda von Meck, for whom he provided arrangements of his works for violin and piano. On 30 December 1876 she wrote thanking him, adding kind words about his music. His reply was equally profuse and thus began a close and valued friendship.

Tchaikovsky made slow progress with his ***Fourth Symphony*** but by 15 May 1877 he had sketched the first three movements. He was then diverted from work both by a love letter from Antonina Milyukova, a former student at the Conservatory, and by a suggestion that he convert Pushkin's prose-novel *Yevgeny Onegin* into an opera. He immediately composed the music for Tatyana's Letter scene (in which she declares her love for Onegin, only to be humiliatingly rebuffed). Tchaikovsky soon found himself placed in a similar position to that work's 'hero', a character he had hitherto despised. Like Onegin, Tchaikovsky chided Antonina for becoming too emotional but her letters became more impassioned.

On 1 June Tchaikovsky tried in vain to convince her that she was not his 'type'; two days later he proposed marriage and was accepted. To his patroness he explained his terrible quandary: 'From the letter that followed I concluded that if, having gone so far, I were suddenly to turn away from this girl, then I

would make her truly wretched, would drive her to a tragic end. Thus I was faced with difficult alternatives: either to preserve my own freedom at the price of this girl's death ('death' is not an empty word here; she does indeed love me to distraction), or to *marry*. I had to choose the latter course.'

With nothing in common and Antonina being totally unfamiliar with his music the marriage was a disaster. In correspondence he resolved to remain optimistic, but also stated that he found his wife 'physically repugnant', admitting that but for the effect this might have on family and friends, he might consider suicide. One week into August the newly-marrieds were living apart, with Tchaikovsky staying with his sister whilst scoring parts of the first movement and *Onegin*.

On 23 September he returned to Antonina but a week later he bungled a suicide attempt. He fled to St Petersburg where he suffered a nervous breakdown and finally left Russia. Having left his unfinished scores in Moscow, Tchaikovsky was only able to resume work on the symphony in mid December completing it on 7 January 1878. The premiere took place on 22 February, following which his friends seemed unprepared to comment on the work. Finally Taneyev stepped forward: the first movement was too long and resembled programme music; the second was rhythmically repetitive; the trio from the scherzo reminded him of ballet music whilst he found the finale 'insufficiently interesting'. The composer insisted there was 'not a note in this symphony which I did not feel deeply, and which did not serve as an echo of the impulses within my soul'. He did admit however to a certain artificiality in the first movement.

Much of the symphony was composed before Tchaikovsky even knew Antonina. Nevertheless he had earlier made the decision to marry in an attempt to suppress his homosexuality: this is surely the inexorable and unforgiving *Fate* which serves as the overriding motif for the work. Two works perhaps act as (un)conscious models in this symphony. In 1876 Tchaikovsky was an early visitor to Bayreuth and had seen *The* Ring: in Tchaikovsky's Fate motif can be heard echoes of both Wagner's Anvil and Spear motifs. Tchaikovsky also saw *Carmen* that year. From both works the idea of one's inability to escape Fate had become almost an obsession.

Tchaikovsky's disastrous marriage in 1877 left him suicidal but thanks to an annuity of 6000 roubles from his patroness Nadezhda von Meck he was less reliant on commissioned work. His troubled private life did not however make him immune from the emotional instability of others. His regular visits to his sister Sasha's home became more irksome as her children grew up and her health worsened. One of her daughters in particular gave him problems: in 1882 the twenty-year old Tanya Davidova had shocked Tchaikovsky with her openly flirtatious behaviour with her music teacher Blumenfeld. She had also become a morphine addict and her increasingly eccentric behaviour caused Tchaikovsky to flee Kamenka in January 1883, travelling first to Berlin and then to Paris. To his horror his brother arrived in Paris with Tanya in tow who not only had to undergo painful treatment for her addiction but who also gave birth to an illegitimate child.

Tchaikovsky began his ***Fifth Symphony*** in 1888 following a period of extended travel abroad as conductor. He was greeted with enormous acclaim in Leipzig, Berlin, Hamburg, Prague, Paris, and London, making the acquaintance of several composers including Brahms, Grieg, Ethel Smyth, Gounod, Massenet, Fauré, Widor and Dvořák, as well as Richard Strauss, Mahler and Busoni, who were yet to establish themselves internationally. The exertion of and planning for the tour led to composition taking second place, but soon after his return to Russia in late March 1888 he began to plan new works. First and foremost, so he told his brother, was to be a new symphony (interestingly he was also contemplating an opera: he discounted *The Queen of Spades* because the subject failed to touch him and he felt that he 'should compose it indifferently'. However he soon changed his mind and *The Queen of Spades* became what many feel to be his finest opera).

That summer Tchaikovsky moved into a new house at Frolovskoye, between Klin and Moscow where he planned to relax, garden and compose to his heart's content in the kind of privacy he had not experienced for some time. After a brief but slightly discomforting visit to St Petersburg when he met his family and also the Tsar, he returned to Frolovskoye resolved not only to compose the symphony but also a second work, a symphonic poem based on Shakespeare's *Hamlet.* By the end of May 1888 Tchaikovsky was able to tell his brother Modest that he had begun work on his *Fifth Symphony* and a month later he had finished preliminary sketches of this work. Instead of immediately proceeding to the scoring of the symphony however, he sketched out *Hamlet* and only then returned to finish work on the symphony. By the end of August the *Fifth Symphony* was fully scored, and he then assisted his friend Laroche in scoring an overture. That done he set about orchestrating *Hamlet* in time for both this and the *Fifth Symphony* to be premiered in November.

Tchaikovsky set out the following to bear in mind for the first movement of the *Fifth Symphony*: 'Introduction: Total submission to Fate, or put another way, the inscrutable predestination of Providence. Allegro. 1. Murmurs, doubts, laments, reproaches against… XXX. 2. Shall I cast myself into the embrace of *faith*? A wonderful programme if it can only be fulfilled'.
Commentators have speculated freely as to the meaning of 'XXX' here; Tchaikovsky's homosexuality seems as good a guess as any. However, in contrast to the *Fourth Symphony*, there is nothing malevolent about the Fate motif that opens the *Fifth* and both David Brown and Gerald Abraham comment that it is surely no accident in Tchaikovsky's quotation of Glinka's *Life for the Tsar* as part of the Fate motif (Glinka's words here are 'Do not turn to sorrow'). Only during the mighty slow movement does the Fate motif throw doubt on a positive outlook on life. Its reappearance at the end of the finale, if slightly banal, merely serves to rubber-stamp a somewhat false victory or rather an emphatically total submission to Fate.

By 1893 Tchaikovsky's music was being more widely performed and he was in demand as a conductor; he was being pressed to accept honours and awards by Cambridge University and the Académie Française, yet by the end of the year Russia's then greatest composer was dead, officially a victim of cholera but according to some sources, actually a suicide.

Tchaikovsky's ***Sixth Symphony*** had been sketched between 16 February and 5 April 1893 but he became 'timid and unsure' of himself (letter to Modest dated 3 August) about the scoring. Some four months elapsed before he began the orchestrations but once started, the work was completed at the end of August. Often Tchaikovsky changed his opinion of a piece once it was completed but initially he maintained that this was undoubtedly his finest work.

Tchaikovsky had prepared a programme for a new symphony much earlier in 1891 stating that the 'essence of the symphony is Life' but that the finale signified 'Death'. To his nephew Bob Davidov, the proposed dedicatee, he wrote in February 1893 that his new programme must 'remain a mystery to everyone. Let them guess away.' After completion he wrote 'I shouldn't be surprised if this symphony is torn to pieces or is little appreciated; it wouldn't be the first time. But I definitely consider it to be the best and, in particular, the most sincere of my works. I love it as I have never loved any other of my musical offspring.' However doubts began to creep in after a preliminary run-through on 21 October by staff and students of the Moscow Conservatory when Tchaikovsky wondered about the wisdom of ending the piece on such a downward note; for a while he even considered composing a new Finale. At the premiere itself on 28 October 1893 conducted by the composer, the audience found the work bewildering, as some do even now. How many of us have experienced concerts where audience members unfamiliar with this symphony have burst into premature applause at the end of the third movement? Nine days later Tchaikovsky was dead.

Despite his brother Modest's subsequent attempts to convince the world that Tchaikovsky had led a relatively carefree final year, there had been much to depress the composer in his last months. Konstantin and Vladimir Shilovsky, and Karl Albrecht, three of his longstanding friends, all died during June and July whilst he was abroad (he had been to receive a doctorate by Cambridge University along with Saint-Saëns, Grieg, Bruch and Boïto). On his return to Russia Tchaikovsky was touched by the death of another old friend from Moscow Conservatory, and not long afterwards as he travelled to St Petersburg, his train passing through Frolovskoye, Tchaikovsky pointed his companions to the church where he wished to be buried.

According to Modest, Tchaikovsky dined out on the evening of 1 November having been to the theatre. He walked home afterwards 'completely calm and well'. The following morning he complained of an upset stomach, and, not feeling hungry at lunchtime, he drank (untreated) water instead and felt nauseous. Modest went out during the afternoon, returning at five o'clock to find his brother feeling worse so he sent for Dr Bertenson. Tchaikovsky's condition deteriorated sharply so that by the end of the evening Bertenson had been joined by his brother, also a doctor. Both diagnosed cholera; Tchaikovsky died on 6 November. This 'official' version however has a number of inconsistencies: he may have drunk the untreated water at the restaurant (ignoring warnings from other diners), ***not*** at Modest's house; the incubation period for cholera is several hours longer than that taken to diagnose his illness; the timing of events leading to the death differ strongly in accounts, in one case by as much as a day; Rimsky-Korsakov noted in his memoirs that Tchaikovsky's body was left on open display for visitors paying their last respects to touch and even kiss (something never allowed in a cholera victim).

It has emerged that shortly before his death Tchaikovsky had recklessly entered into a relationship with a certain aristocrat. To prevent damaging publicity to Tchaikovsky's former school, a code of honour court was convened at the house of Nikolay Jacobi, senior procurator to the Senate, at which Tchaikovsky was present. After five hours Tchaikovsky emerged panic-stricken. Jacobi's wife was informed that Tchaikovsky had been ordered to commit suicide: a few days later he was dead. This account neatly explains the recklessness with which he partook of untreated water. Mrs Jacobi first revealed the story in 1913 but it did not become more publicly available until told by Alexandra Orlova in 1981.

Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra / Antal Doráti

Tchaikovsky composed ***Marche Slave*** in 1876 following the outbreak of war between Turkey and Serbia-Montenegro and was to be played at a concert given in aid of wounded Serbs. Originally named *Serbo-Russian March* Tchaikovsky sourced three Serbian folk songs on which to base the score, completed in five days. Russia avoided being drawn into the war and although Tchaikovsky rarely made political comment, he made an exception in this case writing 'The declaration of war is expected from hour to hour…it's terrible yet also pleasing that our beloved country is at last ready to give proof of her character.' Given the gung-ho attitude of the audience and Tchaikovsky's use of the Russian national anthem, a successful reception at the premiere on 17 November 1876 was guaranteed.

Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra / Konstantin Ivanov

***Symphony No.1*:** After Tchaikovsky had been appointed Professor of Harmony at the Moscow Conservatory at the beginning of 1866, he was encouraged by the positive reception to his *Overture in F,* and settled down to compose his first symphony following consultation with Nikolay Rubinstein. The process of composition caused him huge anguish as he worked on the score night and day between March and July. His doctor advised him to take a break and that summer, whilst on holiday with his family, Tchaikovsky acquainted himself with the symphonies of Mendelssohn and Schumann.

Returning to Moscow in the autumn, Tchaikovsky resumed his work on the symphony, only to fall ill once more suffering from insomnia and hallucinations. By the end of 1866 the ***First Symphony*** had been completed to Tchaikovsky's satisfaction and he showed his work to his former teachers Anton Rubinstein and Nikolay Zaremba, neither of whom offered the young composer much encouragement. At their suggestion, Tchaikovsky revised the symphony and both the slow movement and scherzo were performed in St Petersburg in February 1867. Their lack of success made Tchaikovsky despondent about the prospect of his works finding a willing audience in St Petersburg - the cultural capital of Russia – and resentful of the advice given him by his conservatively-minded teachers. He decided to go back to his first drafts and presented the work once more to Nikolay Rubinstein who agreed to conduct the whole work in Moscow in February 1868. On this occasion the audience gave an enthusiastic reception to the ***First Symphony*** and cheered Tchaikovsky as he took a bow. Tchaikovsky was satisfied, although further alterations were made just prior to the publication in 1875. The work, dedicated to Nikolay Rubinstein, shows the considerable influence of his summer reading and has been described by Edward Garden as 'by Mendelssohn out of Schumann' (Master Musicians: Tchaikovsky J M Dent, 1973).

Tchaikovsky allocated titles to two of the movements: the opening movement is subtitled 'Dreams of a Winter Journey' and the second movement 'Land of Desolation, Land of Mists'. Neither seem particularly relevant to the work as a whole although Tchaikovsky later gave the symphony its nickname '***Winter Dreams'***. The first movement contains what could conceivably be a Russian folk tune as its principal subject and despite its obvious Mendelssohnian influence and the anguish caused by its composition, has all the glowing confidence of youth. The *Adagio cantabile* looks ahead to Tchaikovsky's mature works in the mournful writing for strings that open and close this lovely slow movement whilst the oboe melody gradually builds to an emotional climax which subsides eventually to echo the opening melancholic mood.

The *Scherzo*, which begins with the lightness reminiscent of Mendelssohn, offers the listener the first of Tchaikovsky's great orchestral waltzes in its contrasting trio section. Never one to waste a good tune, Tchaikovsky recycled an unpublished *Piano Sonata* movement in C sharp minor originally composed in 1865. The pace quickens in the final movement following the *Andante lugubre*, and in a vigorous arrangement of a Russian folk tune *The Garden Blooms* Winter is sent packing. After the various themes are developed, Tchaikovsky momentarily returns to the lugubrious opening passage before the strings lead the remainder of the orchestra in a merry dance to a riotous conclusion. Tchaikovsky used the folk song again in his *Cantata for the Opening of the Polytechnic Exhibition in Moscow* (1872).

Despite the mental illness suffered during the composition of the *First Symphony,* Tchaikovsky always maintained that this was one of his favourite works: in 1883 he wrote to his patron Nadezhda von Meck: 'Despite all its glaring deficiencies, I have a genuine soft spot for my *First Symphony*. It is a sin of my sweet youth'. However Tchaikovsky had to wait until the year of this letter to hear this favourite work once again in performance.

Russian State Cinematographic Orchestra / Sergei Skřipka

***'Symphony of Life (7th)'*:** Pyotr Tchaikovsky had completed his *Fifth Symphony* in August 1888 and spent much of the following year on concert tours in Europe and London. He finished his ballet *The Sleeping Beauty* but otherwise composed little, whilst 1890 was largely taken up with the composition of his opera *Pikovaya Dama (The Queen of Spades*) and with its premiere in St Petersburg in December. He was however beginning to fret that he had not composed an orchestral piece for a while but only began to sketch out ideas on a new symphony in the spring of 1891 whilst he was in Paris en route for the United States where he was to conduct concerts in New York, Baltimore and Philadelphia. In his programme for this new symphony he wrote 'The ultimate essence is Life. The first part is all impulse, passion, confidence, activity…Second part is love: third disappointment; fourth ends dying away'.

Of more immediate concern to Tchaikovsky in 1891, however, was the need to fulfil a commission from the St Petersburg Opera (following the success of *Pikovaya Dama*), for a double bill consisting of an opera (*Iolanta*) and a ballet (*The Nutcracker*). Even so, travelling back from the USA in May 1891, he noted down themes for the symphony alongside his work on the double bill for the St Petersburg Opera, but upon his return to Russia he set these aside in favour of the double bill. In his correspondence the next reference to the new symphony occurs in April 1892 in a letter to Alexander Siloti. He remarks that he intends to work at the piece between May and June whilst at his new house in Klin; and indeed during this time he completed the sketches for the first and final movements. However good his intentions were to complete the work that summer, other work (proofing *Nutcracker*) got in the way and he decided to postpone finishing the sketches until November 1892. As plans took shape for another extensive tour Tchaikovsky decided to abandon the symphony altogether; he considered what he had written to be uninspired 'just an empty playing with sounds' and that he had begun the project merely because he had to write *something*. However the sketches did not go entirely to waste: the first movement resurfaced as the opening movement of a *Third Piano Concerto*

(completed by Taneyev and published posthumously) and other material was used for a piano piece *Scherzo-Fantaisie* Op.72, No. 10. The next completed symphony composed by Tchaikovsky was therefore the *Pathétique* which was naturally designated as No.6.

Half-hearted attempts were made after Tchaikovsky's death in 1893 to create something substantial from the sketches but it was not until 1951 that a serious effort was made to complete the symphony. Semyon Bogatyryev (1890-1960), Professor at the Moscow Conservatory and Director of the Belo-Russian Conservatory in Minsk and also a part-time composer based his first movement on the equivalent movement of the *Third Piano Concerto*. For the second movement Bogatyryev discovered that fewer than half of Tchaikovsky's sketches were in a workable state. He therefore made use of an *Andante for Piano and Orchestra*, another unfinished piece orchestrated by Taneyev, itself loosely based on Tchaikovsky sketches. For the scherzo third movement Bogatyryev orchestrated the above-mentioned *Scherzo-Fantaisie*. Taneyev had also orchestrated another uncompleted project by Tchaikovsky: *Finale for Piano and Orchestra* which was designated as Op. 79. This became the basis for the finale movement. Bogatyryev's reconstruction of Tchaikovsky's ***Symphony in E flat major*** was completed in 1955. It was first performed in February 1957 by the Moscow Region Philharmonic Orchestra under M. Terian, and was published in 1961. It was championed by Eugene Ormandy in the West with its first recording in 1962.

Large Symphony Orchestra of the Ministry of Culture, Russian Federation / Gennadi Rozhdestvensky

By 1885 it seemed to Tchaikovsky's closest friends that he had finally managed to put the crisis years of the 1870s behind him. Having been accustomed to travelling across Europe and staying with friends and relatives, in February he rented a property at Maidanovo near Klin, close enough to Moscow to travel there if required. There he quickly settled into a daily routine of composing morning and evening, and taking lengthy walks during the afternoon.

Some time before, during the autumn of 1882, the composer Mily Balakirev (1837-1910) had sent Tchaikovsky a scenario for a new symphonic work based on Lord Byron's poem ***Manfred.*** The scenario was the work of academic and critic Vladimir Stasov who had sent it to Balakirev in 1868. Balakirev had immediately brought it to the attention of Berlioz who the previous season had conducted his four movement symphony *Harold In Italy* (based on Byron's *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*) in St Petersburg. Berlioz had declined to set the work to music, pleading old age and infirmity (he died not long after) whereupon Balakirev shelved it until 1882 when he sent it to Tchaikovsky. Never averse to proffering advice whether sought or not, Balakirev suggested that Tchaikovsky might follow Berlioz' lead in writing a symphony with an *idée fixe* motif, associated with Manfred himself, appearing in each movement. Balakirev had previously guided Tchaikovsky through the composition of the *Romeo and Juliet Overture* but in the intervening period he had fallen on hard times. Tchaikovsky was undoubtedly pleased to hear from his old friend but he was unenthused about the new project writing to Balakirev in November 1882: 'I thought that your programme would awaken in me a burning desire to set it to music…but when I received it I was disappointed'. Tchaikovsky had no wish to imitate Berlioz and had too much respect for Schumann's music for his Manfred composed some 30 years earlier.

The idea lay dormant until October 1884 when Tchaikovsky and Balakirev met in St Petersburg. Balakirev again suggested Stasov's scenario and added further suggestions. This time Tchaikovsky did not dismiss the matter out of hand but told his colleague that he would purchase a copy of the poem before his next trip outside Russia, a journey which included a visit to the Alps. He was back at Maidanovo in April 1885 but had only sketched a few ideas whilst in Switzerland, being also at work on a new opera. During the summer months however he worked on *Manfred*, at first regarding the task as something of a chore, but gradually becoming more enthused until he became exhausted by the sheer scale of the symphony. By the end of September 1885 Tchaikovsky was able to announce to Balakirev that the symphony was fully scored.

The first movement depicts Manfred's wandering in the Alps, his life in ruins. He is obsessed by hopeless memories, and that of Astarte, whom he once passionately loved, lies uppermost in his heart. Seeking to alleviate his torment he seeks solace in the occult but this has no effect on his despair. The second movement (forming the scherzo section of the symphony) has Manfred encountering an Alpine fairy who appears to him in the form of a rainbow seen through the spray of a waterfall. In the pastoral third movement, Manfred finds solace among the alpine farmers and hunters but as with the previous movement, he is unable to forget the harsh reality of the outside world. The final movement (generally considered the weakest of the four) finds Manfred seeking relief in the hellish atmosphere of the bacchanalian celebrations held in the cave of Arimanes. The spirit of his beloved Astarte foretells his imminent death and, satisfied that he will at last find peace and forgiveness, Manfred dies.

The *Manfred Symphony*, dedicated to Balakirev, was premiered in March 1886 under Max Erdmannsdörfer. Tchaikovsky was awarded some acclaim at the end of the piece and as so often, at the time he considered it his greatest work to date. Three years later, whilst working on the *Fifth Symphony*, he changed his mind and considered destroying all but the first movement. Several years had passed since his *Fourth Symphony* (completed in 1878. the year following his disastrous marriage) which had at its centre an implacable motif depicting the cruel hand of fate, as felt so strongly by Tchaikovsky at that time. Musicologists have commented that he surely felt some kinship with the lonely Manfred, who longs for relief from his despair.

Despite the weakness of the overlong final movement, acknowledged by Tchaikovsky himself, it is difficult to explain the relative neglect of this symphony. However, it does require a larger than average orchestra (complete with harmonium or organ) and it is also the longest of the Tchaikovsky symphonies. It should be noted though that it is of a fairly modest scale when placed alongside either Mahler or Bruckner.

Sviatoslav Richter *(piano)* ***/ Vienna Symphony Orchestra / Herbert von Karajan***

Pyotr Tchaikovsky was occupied with three works in 1874: the *Second String Quartet in F major* (Op. 22, ALC 1295), an opera *Vakula the Smith* and at the tail end of the year, his ***First Piano Concerto in B flat minor*** (Op. 23). The concerto had yet to be orchestrated when, on Christmas Eve 1874, he showed it to Nikolai Rubinstein, who he hoped would welcome a new work offering new challenges to the performer. He was completely taken aback by Rubinstein's negative comments and the composer commented afterwards: 'It seems that my concerto is worthless, unplayable and passages so awkward and clumsy that nothing could be done to put them right.' When Rubinstein saw the effects his negativity had upon Tchaikovsky he offered to perform the new work on condition that Tchaikovsky make sweeping changes. But Tchaikovsky was less than enthusiastic about outside interference (Balakirev's unwanted suggestions about corrections to his *Romeo and Juliet Overture* had led to a coolness between the two in 1870, although Tchaikovsky later adopted Balakirev's suggestions). He dedicated the piano concerto to Sergey Taneyev but changed his mind again and offered it instead to Hans von Bülow, doubtless with a mind to seeing the work performed outside Russia.

The German Hans von Bülow had no qualms about accepting the concerto and he gave the premiere in October 1875 whilst on a concert tour of the U.S.A. Afterwards he relayed details of the successful premiere to Tchaikovsky by telegram, probably the first time Boston and Moscow had been connected in this way. The Russian premiere took place in Petersburg and in Moscow it was conducted by Nikolay Rubinstein (to atone for his earlier remarks?) with Taneyev as soloist. The following year Tchaikovsky met Rubinstein half-way and sanctioned alterations prior to the second edition, published in time for the first London performance.

One of the alterations concerned the piano chords that follow the famous horn motif at the beginning of the work. It is often remarked that Tchaikovsky's grandiose and striking opening fails to reappear during the course of the concerto (likewise the opening motif of the *Violin Concerto*). Following the arresting opening the meter changes to duple time as a jaunty theme, based on a Ukrainian folk-song, emerges. This alternates with a rather melancholy sighing motif heard initially from the woodwind instruments. The beautiful slow movement features a gentle flute melody played above pizzicato strings embellished by

the piano. This is contrasted with a scherzo section. The finale opens with a Russian folk-tune followed by a sweeping string melody. These two themes hold sway in a movement which gives ample opportunity for dynamic virtuosity from the soloist. **© 2012 James Murray (www.kernowclassics.co.uk)**

Mstislav Rostropovich (cello)/ Moscow Youth Symphony Orchestra/ Kyrill Kondrashin

Tchaikovsky's ***Pezzo capriccioso*** has a more sombre tone, despite its title. The work was written in 1887 and reflects the composer's grief at the fatal illness of his close friend Nikolay Kondratyev, who was dying from syphilis at a sanitorium in Aachen, Germany. Tchaikovsky visited him, and then moved on to Paris, where he met the cellist Anatoliy Brandukov, for whom the work was written. (Brandukov had been a pupil of Fitzenhagen, and later succeeded him at Professor of Cello at the Moscow Conservatory.) The first performance of *Pezzo capriccioso* was given by Brandukov in Paris in 1888, in an arrangement for cello and piano. The full orchestral version was premiered the following year in Moscow, with the composer conducting the orchestra. Brandukov also became acquainted with many of the leading French composers during his years in Paris. In 1881, he gave a performance of the *Cello Concerto No.1* by Camille Saint-Saëns (1835–1921) under the composer's baton, an event that significantly raised his profile in the West. **Gavin Dixon 2020**

Emil Gilels (piano) / USSR State Symphony / Kyrill Kondrashin

On 5 January 1875, in a classroom at the Moscow Conservatoire, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky played through his newly-composed ***Piano Concerto in B flat minor*** to the Director of that institution, Nikolai Rubinstein. Tchaikovsky had been hoping for approval or at least some constructive criticism but, instead, Rubinstein claimed that the concerto was both 'worthless' and 'unplayable' and that until it had been radically revised he would not consider playing it at one of his concerts. Tchaikovsky's response was to say that he would not change a note but publish it as it then stood. In the event, Tchaikovsky did make a few changes and Rubinstein, once the concerto had started to prove popular with audiences, not only learnt the 'unplayable' solo part but also conducted performances of it given by other pianists.

In October 1879, Tchaikovsky was staying at his sister's home in the Ukraine but soon this period of relaxation gradually began to turn into boredom. However, as he both recognized the symptoms of his condition and understood its remedy, he set himself to work on a new composition. As he explained to his brother, Anatoly, 'I have started writing a piano concerto in a leisurely sort of way. I only work in the mornings before lunch but', he added, 'composition is something of an effort.' Nevertheless, by the time he left for Moscow at the beginning of November he had virtually completed the first movement. He continued to work at the concerto during subsequent visits to Paris and Rome and completed it in May 1880. Despite Rubinstein's initial condemnation of his first concerto, Tchaikovsky still felt the need to send the score of his second to him for comment. Sergei Taneyev, one of Tchaikovsky's pupils, studied it with him and was able to tell its composer that 'there was absolutely nothing to be changed'.

However, once Taneyev had performed the concerto in public he did express the view that the first two movements were too long and, in due course, Tchaikovsky agreed to three small cuts but they were nowhere near as drastic as those suggested by another of his pupils, Alexander Siloti (1863-1945). In January 1889, Tchaikovsky wrote to tell Siloti that, although he was extremely grateful for his concern and interest in the concerto, he could neither agree to the re-ordering of the material in first movement nor to the cuts he was proposing, mostly of which were the second. (In the composer's original version important parts for solo violin and cello in this movement had almost turned the work into a triple concerto.) Despite Tchaikovsky's strong views on the matter, when the concerto was printed in a second editon four years after his death, all of Siloti's cuts were observed and for many years this was the version preferred by most pianists, including Emil Gilels. **© Peter Avis August 2024**

David Oistrakh (violin) /Philadelphia Orchestra / Eugene Ormandy

Following the traumas of his disastrous marriage to Antonina Miliukova, Tchaikovsky fled to the peaceful resort of Clarens on the shores of Lake Geneva intending to occupy himself with the composition of a new piece, the *Grand Sonata* for piano. There he was joined by the young violinist Iosif Kotek who had been studying with Joachim in Berlin. Of several works discussed by Tchaikovsky and Kotek, Lalo's *Symphonie Espagnole* made a positive impression and Tchaikovsky wrote to his friend and patron Nadezhda von Meck that Lalo 'in the same way as Delibes and Bizet, does not strive after profundity but carefully avoids routine, seeks out new forms and thinks more about musical beauty than about observing established musical traditions'. In March 1878, Tchaikovsky laid aside the *Grand Sonata* and completed the ***Violin Concerto in D major*** (including a complete rewrite of the slow movement) in a few weeks. His original slow movement later became the *Méditation* from *Souvenir d'un lieu cher Op. 42* (Memory of a dear place), a group of three pieces completed in May 1878 whilst Tchaikovsky was staying at Brailivo, an estate belonging to Nadezhda von Meck in the Ukraine. He left the manuscript, dedicated to B******* (clearly the Brailivo Estate), in the care of Von Meck with a request that it be sent to Władysław Pachulski to prepare for publication. Jurgenson published *Souvenir* in May 1879 and the composer declared himself satisfied with the result. *Méditation* is more often played as a separate piece, occasionally in a version arranged by Glazunov for violin and orchestra commissioned by Jurgenson after Tchaikovsky's death.

Although Kotek assisted with the violin writing Tchaikovsky was reluctant to dedicate the *Violin Concerto* to him, fearing it would lead to gossip. Kotek became progressively less keen on the concerto as time went on and Tchaikovsky then approached the Hungarian virtuoso Leopold Auer but he too pulled away, saying that the violin writing was 'not suited to the character of the instrument'. Finally, Alfred Brodsky agreed to give the premiere which took place in Vienna on 4 December 1881 under Hans Richter. Pitifully under-rehearsed, the orchestra played with little conviction and with minimal support for Brodsky. The audience was by no means negative but critics – in particular the notoriously hard-to-please Eduard Hanslick – condemned the piece. Hanslick's verdict on a concerto that is now amongst the most popular in the repertoire is hard to justify: he commented that the opening movement started well but descended into chaos where 'it was no longer a question of whether the violin was being played but that it was being ripped about and torn to tatters'. The second movement Hanslick found quite pleasant but the sudden jolt of the transition into the finale raised his blood pressure once more and he compared the final movement to 'the brutish grim jollity of a Russian Church festival' with its 'common, ravaged faces, rough oaths and cheap vodka'.
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Moscow State Symphony Orchestra / Pavel Kogan

In early 1876 Tchaikovsky had decided he must marry: in his letter of 22 September 1876 to his brother Modest he saw this as being the only way of 'eradicating from myself my pernicious passions' (a reference to his homosexuality). He assured Modest, who was also homosexual, that he would not rush into marriage – something that also alarmed his sister Sasha – and yet this is precisely what happened. The musical background to this period of torment was the feverish Lisztian tone poem ***Francesca da Rimini***, subtitled *Fantasy after Dante*, which had been originally conceived as an operatic subject. Tchaikovsky had read a proposed libretto by Konstantin Zvanstev inspired by Canto V of Dante's *Inferno*. Whilst in France visiting Modest, Tchaikovsky read Canto V and decided to compose a symphonic poem rather than an opera. He wrote a prose version of the story to accompany the score, briefly summarised thus: Dante and his guide Virgil enter the second circle of Hell, inhabited by adulterers. As a tempest rages they hear cries of despair. Dante's attention is drawn to a couple locked in embrace and learns that they are Francesca and Paolo, two lovers who were torn apart when Francesca was forced to marry Paolo's deformed and hateful brother Malatesta. Francesca and Paolo met in secret and, reading the tale of Lancelot, were overtaken by their passion for one another. They were discovered by Malatesta and killed, condemned to drift for ever in Hell. As the whirling tempest returns Dante faints and is carried away by Virgil.

Tchaikovsky finished sketching the work in late October 1876 and completed the scoring in November. Composed on a grand scale, this is one of Tchaikovsky most *angst*-ridden and passionate works. It was premiered on 9 March 1877 in Moscow conducted by Nikolay Rubinstein. Both this and its first performance in St Petersburg in 1878 were hugely successful, with most agreeing that this was Tchaikovsky's finest work to date.
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Mstislav Rostropovich, cello / Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra / Gennady Rozhdestvensky

The short works by **Pyotr Tchaikovsky** reflect the popularity of the cello as a solo instrument in late 19th-century Russia. From the 1870s, significant cello schools developed in Russia's two main cities, around Karl Davidov, Professor of Cello at the St Petersburg Conservatory (see ALC 1066, NFPMA 99142), and Wilhelm Fitzenhagen, Professor of Cello at the Moscow Conservatory. Both were composers in their own right, but were also significant for the cello works written for them, and for the Russian cello tradition they passed on into the 20th century, of which Rostropovich would become the greatest exponent.

When suffering from stress Tchaikovsky often looked back to an idealised former era. 1876 had begun encouragingly for Tchaikovsky: his *Piano Concerto* had been well received, and a trip to Paris which included seeing *Carmen* set his mind racing as to the kind of direction his work might take. Later that year he saw *The Ring* at the first Bayreuth Festival and the experience gave him further pause for thought. It was at this time that he decided that marriage could provide the only solution to his tortured sexuality. As he struggled to make sense of his personal life he began work on the neurotic symphonic poem *Francesca da Rimini*, doubtless seeing parallels between Francesca and Paolo's giving way to the 'tempest of sensual lust' and his own urges. As an antidote to depression Tchaikovsky composed in December 1876 his ***Variations on a Rococo Theme*** for his German friend Professor W Fitzenhagen who, in addition to being a director of the Russian Musical Society, also taught cello at the Moscow Conservatory. *Variations on a Rococo Theme* seeks to reproduce the atmosphere, if not the style, of what Tchaikovsky believed to be a less complicated age. Other instances of Tchaikovsky finding inspiration from the 18th century include the *Fourth Orchestral Suite* (in which he arranged Mozart's music) and his opera *The Queen of Spades*.

USSR State Symphony Orchestra / Evgeni Svetlanov

Ballet Suites: Absolutely self-sufficient as a composer, Tchaikovsky had no need to be guided by Balakirev, leader of the composers' group 'The Mighty Five', or compete with the director of the Moscow Conservatory, Rubinstein. Now that conservatory bears the name of Pyotr Tchaikovsky. Such independence and unbeatable popularity caused the jealousy of fellow composers, who used his unsuccessful marriage to promote a scandal, making Tchaikovsky the target of many lies, which brought the composer of genius to suicide. Tchaikovsky was extremely depressed, watching how seriously Russian society and the Tsar, whom he respected and loved, took the gossip. The most terrible thing was that these accusations were pointed at a composer who devoted a lot of time to children and was author of the famous 'Children's Album' (ALC 1343, Pletnev). Tchaikovsky's death deprived us of many more great compositions. He was 53.

The Swan Lake Suite, Op.20a, represents nine selected numbers from the 'Swan Lake' ballet. Though Tchaikovsky considered making a suite from 'Swan Lake' in 1882, this idea apparently came to nothing. After his death, others compiled and published the suite. It is interesting, that an earlier version of 'Swan Lake' composed in 1871, six years before the second edition, which we know today. Initially the ballet was simple dance music, called 'The Lake of Swans' composed for children and staged at the house of Tchaikovsky's sister, Alexandra, in Kamenka, Ukraine. The success of the '*Swan Lake*' ballet, composed and premiered in 1877 at the Bolshoi theatre, was not easy. The first to rebel were the orchestral players. Bemused by the 'unprecedented difficulty' of the score, they found little help from their 'semi-amateur' conductor Stepan Ryabov. The situation very much reminds us of a story concerning the ballets by Prokofiev - a similar lack of appreciation was expressed in the same way by orchestral musicians many years later. 'Swan Lake', as a successful ballet, dates from the 1895 revival with choreography by Moris Petipa and Lev Ivanov, at the Maryinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg.

Nutcracker Suite, op.71a, was completed by Tchaikovsky in 1892. It was an orchestral version of Hoffmann's fantasy, *The Nutcracker*, adapted by the composer into a ballet genre. Although Tchaikovsky considered the story to be lacking any real dramatic and emotional tension, his *Nutcracker* is one of the most fascinating achievements in ballet. An unusual feature of the score is the use of celesta, a very rare instrument at that time. It was ideal for music 'with the sound of falling drops of water, as from a fountain.' Tchaikovsky used it to characterize the *Sugar Plum Fairy*. A boy's choir was another innovation in ballet music. *Dances caracteristiques* contains six parts. They were composed and publically performed before work on the ballet was finished. Tchaikovsky brought a capacity for symphonic organisation to the ordinarily rather primitive art of ballet music. There is a reconciliation of dance elements with the demands of symphonic form, the use of large-scale musical structures. It brings greater strength and coherence to the organization of dance sequences. *Divertissements* play the secondary role in the ballet and help to combine structural dances, which form the core of the entire composition, into groups.

Russian musical culture - both operatic and symphonic - draws attention by the multiplicity of uses for two West-European dances: polonaises and waltzes. Theses dances first took root in the Russian 'artistic soil' and gave rise to many masterpieces. They are an original and remarkable phenomenon in Russian music. While instrumental and choral polonaises were written by the predecessors of M. Glinka, it was he who transformed the polonaise from an attribute of court life into a genuine Russian art.

P. Tchaikovsky's waltzes are a precious page of Russian musical heritage. His waltz from the opera "Eugene Onegin" showed well his inspiration and high dramatic art. The entire scene of the "Ball at the Larins" is based on this waltz. The Polish solemn dance-procession, *polonaise*, penetrated into Russian life and influenced composers' creative activity even at the end of the 18th century. Polonaises from "Cherevichki" (The Little Shoes') and 'Sleeping Beauty' both by Tchaikovsky bring a feeling of festivity to these operas.

Russian National Orchestra / Vladimir Yurowski

Tchaikovsky's ***Third Orchestral Suite*** was written in 1884, at a time of relative calm in the composer's turbulent life. In 1877, he had married Antonina Miliukova, a former student, but the marriage was a disaster, leading the composer to contemplate suicide, and to a prolonged period of writer's block. His solution was to leave Moscow and travel widely. The anguish of Tchaikovsky's personal life found expression in his Fourth Symphony (1877/8), but in the following years of seclusion, Tchaikovsky put symphonic writing aside, to focus instead on less dramatic forms. His four Orchestral Suites were written in the years 1878–87, between his Fourth and Fifth Symphonies. They resemble his symphonies in scale, but are more freely structured, showcasing the composer's gift for melodic invention and orchestral colour.

Work on the *Third Orchestral Suite* began in February 1884, when Tchaikovsky was staying in Kamenka in southern Ukraine. In April, he wrote to his patron, Nadezhda von Meck, '[the suite] has for some time been particularly attractive to me because of the freedom it affords the composer not to be inhibited by any traditions, by conventional methods and established rules'. The concept of an instrumental suite goes back to the Baroque, a connection that Tchaikovsky explored in his *Third Suite*. As in a Baroque suite, the work has several dance movements and a highly contrapuntal finale. The composer originally envisaged a five-movement structure, with a first movement entitled 'Contrastes', but he soon abandoned this in favour of the final arrangement of four movements.

From the gentle and ruminate first movement, 'Elégie', it is clear that Tchaikovsky is deliberately avoiding the drama and tension of the symphonic form. The movement is a flowing *cantabile*, subtly mixing the colours of woodwinds and strings, and rising to an ardent, if still restrained tutti climax. The second movement is a 'Valse mélancolique'. Tchaikovsky's diaries reveal that this movement took much effort from the composer, but the resulting music is as natural and flowing as any of his great waltzes, a buoyant dance but tinged with a hint of sadness. The Scherzo is another lively dance movement, characterised by incisive staccato rhythms and a frenetic interplay between the woodwinds and strings. The finale is a set of large-scale variations. In the first six variations, Tchaikovsky alternates between contrapuntal intricacy (Variations 1, 3, 5) and sections of more direct lyrical expression. The mood is light, although an allusion to the *Dies irae* plainchant from the Requiem Mass is worked into the Fourth Variation. The final six variations are played together

without a break, creating a grand climax for the work that hints at symphonic culmination, though the rousing dance rhythms more closely resemble conclusions to Tchaikovsky's ballets and operas.

The score was completed at Kamenka, also in Ukraine, on 31 July 1884, and premiered the following January in Moscow, in a concert conducted by Hans von Bülow. Tchaikovsky was surprised by the enthusiastic reception, and wrote to Nadezhda von Meck, 'I have never before experienced such a triumph. I saw that the entire mass of the audience was moved, and grateful to me. These moments are the finest adornments of an artist's life.' **© Gavin Dixon 2021**

Moscow State Symphony Orchestra / Pavel Kogan

The Overture-Fantasy ***Romeo and Juliet dates*** from earlier in Tchaikovsky's career, a time when he was less confident of his art and reliant on the advice of mentors. The project grew out of an earlier tone poem, Fatum, composed in 1869. Tchaikovsky dedicated the work to the composer Mily Balakirev, who conducted a performance in St. Petersburg. But the concert was not a success, and Balakirev wrote to Tchaikovsky outlining the work's defects. Balakirev suggested that his next tone poem should be based on Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet. Balakirev had written a similar overture based on King Lear, which he proposed Tchaikovsky use as a model. Unlike Liszt's tone poems, Balakirev's King Lear does not follow the narrative, but instead represents the characters though distinctive themes, which are then presented in a conventional musical structure.

Tchaikovsky followed this model for his *Romeo and Juliet*. The story is treated abstractly, and the work is based on a tension between the two main themes, a dramatic theme representing the conflict of the Montagues and Capulets, and a lyrical theme representing the love of Romeo and Juliet. The work was dedicated to Balakirev and first performed in 1870. But Balakirev was again critical and suggested significant revisions. Tchaikovsky immediately began to make the suggested changes, and completed a second version later that year. In the second version, the structure is freer, and the conflict between the love theme and the other music is held back to create a more powerful and tragic climax. Ten years later, in 1880, Tchaikovsky returned again to the score. This time, he added the quiet coda and also settled on the subtitle, 'Overture-Fantasia'.

Capriccio Italien also dates from 1880. This was in the period following Tchaikovsky's disastrous marriage when he was touring abroad, and the work was written in Rome. His plan was for a work entitled *Italian Suite on Folk Melodies* modelled on the *Spanish Overtures* of Glinka. It was assembled from melodies that Tchaikovsky found in compilations, as well as several that he heard himself and transcribed. The opening trumpet call was a fanfare that Tchaikovsky heard each morning from the military barracks next to his hotel. And the final tarantella is an Italian melody entitled 'Ciccuzza'.
© Gavin Dixon 2021

In the winter of 1876/7 Tchaikovsky had settled down to compose his *4th Symphony* and began corresponding with the rich widow Nadezhda von Meck who became his patron. In May 1877 he received a love letter from a young woman Antonina Milyukova who claimed to have met him previously. He advised her to master her emotions but she in turn threatened suicide if he did not allow her to meet him. In an impossible position Tchaikovsky agreed to see Antonina when he did his utmost to discourage her; on his second visit they became engaged.

In May 1877 Tchaikovsky had met the singer Elizaveta Lavrovskaya who had suggested Pushkin's *Onegin* as a subject for a future operatic project. Pushkin had seen something of himself in both Onegin (the bored cynic who has seen it all before) and Lensky (the enthusiastic youngster who writes poetry and craves love and happiness). Ironically, like Lensky, Pushkin was to die in a duel at the hands of a man he believed was after the woman he loved. Initially cool towards the idea, Tchaikovsky reconsidered and purchased a copy of the text. One read-through was all that was needed - during the course of one evening Tchaikovsky had set down a scenario, and composed the music for the Letter Scene. He became fixated upon the character of Tatyana: Tchaikovsky despised Onegin for turning her down so it was with some mortification that he saw the parallels between himself and 'the cold, heartless fop' Onegin.

Feeling increasingly agitated by his claustrophobic marriage Tchaikovsky suffered a breakdown. A change of scenery was prescribed and he was whisked off to Europe. His first priority was to complete the *4th Symphony*; he then continued work on *Onegin*, whilst planning its first production. Act Three was completed by 25 January 1878, the Second Act Duel Scene three days later and the entire scoring finished three days after that. Dance has always played an important role in Russian opera; the *Waltz* is heard at Tatyana's name-day celebrations as Onegin flirts with Lensky's girlfriend leading eventually to the fatal duel between the two men. Some time later Tatyana marries Prince Gremin. As the third act curtain rises, the nobility dance a *Polonaise* at the Gremin's palace. Tchaikovsky had to wait longer than expected for the premiere but was in Moscow for the dress rehearsal on 28 March 1879. The audience at the premiere the following night applauded the composer but were cool towards the work itself. **©2009 James Murray (ww.kernowclassics.co.uk)**

Large Symphony Orchestra of Moscow Radio / Vladimir Fedoseyev

Just as Tchaikovsky felt that his *Symphony No.2* at the time of composition contained his best work to date, so was the ***Serenade for Strings***, written in 1880 'as the result of inner compulsion…flowing directly from (his) soul', a source of considerable satisfaction to the composer. At the beginning of the year Tchaikovsky had been in Italy, but he returned to Russia in March following the death of his father some weeks previously, spending some time at his sister's home Kamenka in the Ukraine. It was whilst there (in May 1880) that he completed the boisterous and high-spirited *Capriccio Italien,* which he had begun in Rome. Having finished the *Capriccio*, Tchaikovsky worked on two totally dissimilar works more or less simultaneously: *Serenade for Strings* and the *1812 Festival Overture*. Whereas the *1812* was composed as a result of a commission for the consecration of the Cathedral of the Redeemer in Moscow 'without affection and enthusiasm', the *Serenade for Strings* was conceived whilst the composer was thinking affectionately of the 'distant beloved', his patroness Mme Nadezhda von Meck. Initially Tchaikovsky was unsure as to what form the work would take. In September 1880 he was thinking of it as a new symphony; but then thought about reducing it to a string quartet. During the six weeks it took to compose Tchaikovsky reconsidered and labelled it 'Serenade' and 'the larger the string orchestra, the better the composer's wishes will be met' (Tchaikovsky note attached to the published score). Immediately following its composition Tchaikovsky urged his publisher Peter Ivanovich Jurgenson (1836-1903) to make haste saying that he was 'violently in love with the work and that (he) could not wait for it to be performed'.

From the first performances audiences have taken this most sunny work to their hearts. An informal premiere was given at the Moscow Conservatory by students under Nikolay Rubinstein on 3 December 1880. Sadly Rubinstein died the following March in Paris and the official premiere was held over until October 1882 when Eduard Nápravnik (1839-1915) conducted the work in St Petersburg. Nápravnik's performance was highly successful and the second movement *Valse* was encored. Later when Tchaikovsky toured Europe as a conductor (1888–9) he gave *Serenade for Strings* in a number of cities including Berlin and 'foggy' London where it was warmly received. Nikolay Rubinstein's elder brother Anton (1830-94), Tchaikovsky's former teacher and, in some ways his sternest critic, was persuaded that this was Tchaikovsky's finest work.

Following the energetic opening movement, the *Serenade*'s second movement is one of Tchaikovsky's most elegant waltzes and it is hardly surprising that this work has proved popular with choreographers, including Balanchine. The elegiac third movement demonstrates Tchaikovsky's ability to make much from apparently little, from a simple ascending scale, whilst the finale making use of two folk tunes shows some affinity with the corresponding movement of *Symphony No.2*, revised by Tchaikovsky only shortly before composing this. **© 2005/6 James Murray (re-edited 2010)**

Philadelphia Orchestra / Conductor: Eugene Ormandy

Sleeping Beauty Suite: Although in 1877 Tchaikovsky's first ballet, *Swan Lake*, had been an artistic fiasco on account of its inadequate choreography, he agreed eleven years later to the suggestion of the General Administrator of the Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg that he should compose music for a ballet based upon Charles Perrault's fable "La Belle au Bois dormant". Perrault's original work, published in 1697, consisted of two separate episodes. The second

of these told how, after the Princess's awakening and marriage to the Prince, she and her children escaped the fate of being devoured by her wicked mother-in-law. The Administrator, Ivan Vsevolozsky, deleted the second episode from the scenario which he wrote for Tchaikovsky, made further alterations and aligned the plot as far as possible with the fairy-tale by the Brothers Grimm, which is concerned with basic human experience. The story of the 15-year-old Princess who is cursed by a vengeful fairy and brought back to life after sleeping for a hundred years by a young lover's kiss, is merely coded language for some ancient myths representing death and ressurection, the awakening in Spring of the frozen earth, the transition from child to woman, the dangers of growing up and the redemption of mankind.

Before Tchaikovsky started on the work of composition he had detailed discussions with the great French ballet master Marius Fetica who influenced the style and development of Russian ballet for nearly three generations. It was his practice to plan the choreography in every detail before the beginning of rehearsals and to lay down guidelines for the composer governing the type of music, the number of bars, the tempi, the rhythms and even the orchestration. After receiving the detailed dramatic and musical programme, which stimulated rather than restricted him, Tchaikovsky only needed forty days in which to produce the large score. He reported to his patroness von Meck: "I believe that the music for this ballet will be one of my best works. The subject is so poetic and musically so rewarding that I was completely inspired while I was composing and wrote with all the warmth and passion necessary for a work of quality."

The premiere, which was a huge success, took place on 3rd January 1890 in St. Petersburg, which always looked towards the West. Nevertheless it was very difficult, on account of the very high production costs, to transfer to the rest of Europe one of the most magnificent and colourful works of Russian romantic ballet and most splendid monument to Tsarist absolutism. Until the end of the Second World War the only productions were those in Milan (1896) and London, (by Diaghilev in 1921 and by Sergeyev in 1929); in the premiere, no fewer than 59 out of a total of 155 dancers were designated as soloists.

Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra / Antal Doráti

In 1880 Tchaikovsky was asked to provide a piece for the consecration of the new Cathedral of the Saviour in Moscow. It occupied Tchaikovsky throughout most of late 1880 but was composed 'without affection and enthusiasm' but in the knowledge that being noisy, and a festive and patriotic piece, it would also be very popular! The intention was to perform the overture in the Cathedral square with the cannon to be fired, while at a given signal the bells of the new Cathedral, together with the hundreds of bells hung in other Kremlin churches and towers, were to add their festive clamour to the whole grand uproar. However, the Tsar's assassination and a delay in the completion of the cathedral put things back. The consecration took place in the summer of 1881 minus Tchaikovsky's music. It was Edward Napravnik who finally conducted the premiere as part of the Moscow Arts and Industry exhibition in August 1882—presumably under normal concert hall conditions.

The ***1812 Festival Overture*** opens with a Slavic hymn *God Preserve Thy People* followed by a sprightly version of *La Marseillaise* illustrating French confidence as they advanced towards Moscow; the folk tune *At My Gate* depicts Russian unity. The indecisive battle of Borodino gave the Russians time to set Moscow alight, leaving the French with little to plunder and during the French retreat, the Russian anthem *God Save The Tsar* thunders out, accompanied by cannon fire.

Legendary Recording: The legendary original Mercury recording by Dorati was replaced by the stereo version in 1958 to realise the original 1880 commission for a festival piece to be performed with symphony orchestra augmented by brass, church bells, and cannon. The score had been published with full designation of the augmentations and special effects. The band notation is on two lines of the score and the sixteen cannon shots are precisely indicated, likewise the entry and duration for the church bells. To try to use an authentic French cannon of the 1812 type, Mercury sought help from the Museum of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. A 12-pound siege cannon weighing 3,000lb in bronze was chosen by Curator Gerald Stowe for less risk of cracking when fired! The Cannon No. 87 had been made in Douay, France, on June 20, 1775, and bears the colourful inscription 'Le Constant' ('The Faithful.')

In the days when Moscow boasted over 5,000 bells, it was said that if all were rung at the same time, it was impossible for people to speak to each other on the streets. The most intensive concentration of bells was in the towers and churches of the Kremlin and on the adjoining Red Square—but Russian bells are hung in stationary position and the clappers pulled by ropes, as opposed to the bells being swung. Apart from the logistics and local inconveniences of moving the recording to Moscow, this mean large numbers of people would have been required for the larger bells and so it was decided to record the magnificent Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial Carillon at the Riverside Church, a gift of John D. Rockefeller, Jr. It has a full range of seventy-four bells and occupies the belfry at the top of the 392-foot Riverside Church Tower. Mercury hung three microphones high in the bell tower. The high bells were later re-recorded over the low bells to heighten even further the brilliant bell sonority when heard with the music.

Notes on major artists (in order of appearance within the set)

Gennadi Rozhdestvensky (1931-2018) was born in Moscow. His father was the famous conductor Nikolai Anosov (1900-62) and his mother, from whom he took his professional name, was the soprano Natalya Rozhdestvenskaya. He entered the Moscow Conservatory in 1941 to study conducting with his father and piano with Lev Oborin. Between 1951-61 Rozhdestvensky was a staff conductor at the Bolshoy, conducting their ballet company on his first tour to England in 1956. Appointed artistic director of the USSR Radio and TV orchestra in 1961, three years later he became the youngest ever principal conductor of the Bolshoy remaining there until 1970.

As an important Russian musical figure, Rozhdestvensky was frequently allowed to conduct outside the USSR. He made his Covent Garden debut in 1970 and conducted the Leningrad Philharmonic at the Proms (1971) following this with a USA tour in 1973. During that decade he took up important posts with the Stockholm Philharmonic, the BBC Symphony Orchestra and the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. In the USSR he promoted somewhat daringly several twentieth century works by Hindemith, Poulenc, Orff and Britten, programming them alongside contemporary Soviet and Eastern-bloc compositions. Having concluded his first period at the Bolshoy in 1970, Rozhdestvensky became Principal Conductor of the Moscow Chamber Orchestra and in 1982 he founded the USSR Ministry of Culture Orchestra. He subsequently returned to the Bolshoy, although his relationship with the company came to an abrupt end in 2001 when he resigned following a critical mauling of a new production of Prokofiev's *The Gambler*. His appearances outside Russia became more frequent with many noteworthy opera productions and concert engagements. In amongst all this activity, Rozhdestvensky somehow found the time to make over 500 recordings and to teach conducting in Moscow. He married to the pianist Victoria Postnikova with whom he often performed.

Yevgeny Alexandrovich Mravinsky was born in St Petersburg in May 1903. In 1918 Mravinsky began working at the Mariinsky Theatre. He studied Biology at the University of Leningrad (ex St Petersburg) but then entered the Conservatory where he studied under Nikolay Malko and Alexander Gauk. Between 1921 and 1931 he worked as a repetiteur for the State Ballet School and made his conducting debut in 1929. Until 1937 he was on the music staff at the Bolshoy Opera and at the Kirov Ballet (as the Mariinsky Ballet company was known throughout the Communist era).

Mravinsky first conducted the Leningrad Philharmonic in 1931 and after winning the All-Union Conductor's Competition in Moscow (1938), he was appointed Principal Conductor of this orchestra until 1982 but continued to work with the orchestra until his death in January 1988. As the German army approached Leningrad in 1941, Mravinsky and the orchestra escaped before the city became encircled. They remained in Siberia until 1944 giving over five hundred concerts and making more than two hundred radio appearances.

Yevgeny Mravinsky was a good friend of Dmitri Shostakovich and premiered six of his symphonies (5, 6, 9, 10, 12 and 8 –on ALC 1150 - which was dedicated to him). He was unable to premiere Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 7 "Leningrad"* as he could not gain access to the score and the work was played by the Leningrad Philharmonic's reserve orchestra inside the besieged city. Their friendship cooled considerably after Mravinsky refused to conduct the premiere of Shostakovich's controversial *Symphony No.13* in 1962. The reason given was that the verses set by Shostakovich had not been passed by the Soviet authorities and Mravinsky did not wish to risk the safety of the orchestra. Amongst other important works premiered by Mravinsky was Prokofiev's *Symphony No. 6* in 1947.

Mravinsky made studio recordings with the orchestra from 1938 but after 1961 (after this Tchaikovsky set) he preferred to issue only live recordings, the last of which was released in 1984, the year of his last tour outside the USSR. His final concert took place in March 1987.
The Leningrad Philharmonic (since 1991 known as the St Petersburg Philharmonic) was founded in 1921 and replaced the pre-revolutionary court orchestra. Its first principal conductors were Emil Cooper, Gauk and Malko and between 1941 and 1960 it was co-led by Kurt Sanderling. In 1946 the orchestra toured Finland and Czechoslovakia, followed ten years later by a visit to West and East Germany, Austria and Switzerland. These white-hot Tchaikovsky symphonies (4, 5 and 6) were recorded in September and November 1960 in London by Deutsche Grammophon and have always been regarded as lynchpins of the catalogue. **©2018 James Murray (www.kernowclassics.co.uk)**

Antal Dorati (1906-88) was a Hungarian conductor and composer who was born in Budapest and studied with Kodály and Bartók, conducting the world premiere of the latter's *Viola Concerto*. Dorati made over 600 recordings, including the premiere recording of Aaron Copland's *Symphony No.3* with the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra and conducted the shattering premiere performance of Allan Pettersson's *Symphony No.7* in 1968. He is especially remembered for his complete Haydn symphony cycle for Decca. **© Jeffrey Davis (2013)**

Konstantin Ivanov (1907-84) was a trumpeter in a Red Army regiment who then went on to study conducting at the Moscow Conservatory. One year after his graduation Ivanov won 3rd Prize in the All-Union Conductors Competition (1938) and in 1941 he joined the music staff of the Bolshoy Opera and the All-Union Radio Symphony Orchestra. Having been appointed Principal Conductor of the USSR State Symphony Orchestra in 1945, Ivanov initiated a series of tours, initially to the various republics inside the Soviet Union and then further afield, first in 1956 to Poland and Romania and two years later to Belgium and China. In 1960 Ivanov took the orchestra to the USA where they played Madison Square Garden. He was one of the official conductors at the Tchaikovsky Piano Competition in Moscow and in 1958 was awarded People's Artist of the USSR. Central to his performances was a deep respect for the wishes of the composer and as a young conductor he almost came to blows with the esteemed bass Mark Reizen who he felt was taking liberties with the score. After twenty years with the USSR State Symphony Orchestra, Ivanov was succeeded by Svetlanov.
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The conductor **Sergei Skripka** was born in 1949 and studied first in Kharkov and then, between 1973 and 1979, at the Moscow Conservatory under Leo Ginsberg (teacher also of Fedoseyev and Kitayenko). Upon graduation Skripka conducted the Russian State Cinematic Symphony Orchestra (also known as the Moscow Film Orchestra) leading them on many tours and in 1993 he became their Artistic Director. Since 1980 he has taught at the renowned Gnesin Academy. **©2011 James Murray (www.kernowclassics.co.uk)**

Sviatoslav Richter (1915–97) gave his first public recital in Odessa in 1934 and was taught by Heinrich Neuhaus at the Moscow Conservatory. Having played Prokofiev's *Fifth Piano Concerto* under the composer's direction, Richter gained a formidable reputation in the USSR and played in the West for the first time in 1960. Each subsequent visit was eagerly awaited, but Richter became highly selective in his choice of venue, (always preferring smaller venues and following an extensive tour of the USA in 1970, he chose not to return to that country; Aldeburgh and selected sites in France and Italy became his preferred venues outside Russia). In 1986 Richter gave 91 concerts over a four-month period during a massive tour by car from Leningrad to Vladivostok and then back to Moscow. In addition to numerous solo concerts Richter often played alongside friends such as Britten, Rostropovich, Fischer-Dieskau, Schreier, Oistrakh and Fournier.

No classical musician has divided opinion quite like **Herbert von Karajan** (1908–89). He made his debut conducting *Fidelio* (Salzburg 1927) and was then based at Ulm (1929-34), Aachen (1934-42) and the Berliner Staatsoper (until 1945). He was signed by Walter Legge to record for Columbia in 1946 and soon became known outside Germany and Austria, making his debut in 1948 both for La Scala and the Philharmonia Orchestra. In 1954 he succeeded Furtwängler as Music Director of the Berlin Philharmonic and later held this and other prestigious posts concurrently, including the Artistic Directorship of both the Wiener Staatsoper and the Salzburg Festival (where he founded the Easter Festival in 1967, directing many of the operas himself). As well as the BPO and the Philharmonia, he was associated with other orchestras including the Vienna Philharmonic, Orchestre de Paris and the Vienna Symphony (with whom he recorded the Tchaikovsky concerto with Richter in 1962). Outside the concert hall he has often been vilified for his wartime Nazi affiliations but by 2008, his centenary year, his considerable services to music were revisited and once again recognised.
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The cellist **Mstislav Rostropovich** (1927–2007) was a hugely prolific recording artist throughout the second half of the 20th century. His recording career in Russia began in 1949, soon after his graduation from the Moscow conservatory. By the end of the decade he was also recording regularly for Western labels. This album presents some of Rostropovich's most important Tchaikovsky recordings from the 1950s to early 1960s.

Kirill Kondrashin (1914-81), one of the great figures of Soviet musical life, was born in Moscow into a family of musicians. At the age of 14 he decided to become a conductor. From 1931-6, Kondrashin studied under Boris Khaikin at the Moscow Conservatory, going on to gain conducting experience at the Malyi Opera Theatre in Leningrad. By 1943 Kondrashin had been appointed permanent conductor at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, remaining there until 1956. From 1960-75, he was principal conductor of the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra. Kondrashin was granted political asylum in the Netherlands while on tour in 1978. He gave the long-delayed premiere of Shostakovich's *Symphony No.4* in December 1961 and, a year later, conducted the first performance of the symphony presented here, after the conductor Yevgeny Mravinsky withdrew from the project. **Gavin Dixon 2020**

Emil Gilels was born in Odessa into a musically talented family – his younger sister Elizaveta was a professional violinist married to Leonid Kogan. Pitch perfect, Gilels began taking piano lessons at five, made his debut aged twelve and in 1932 he gained admittance to the Odessa Conservatory. The same year, and despite being too young to participate, he entered the All-Ukrainian Competition, and was awarded a scholarship by the jury. Today, Ukraine's leading piano competition is named in his honour.

His reputation in Soviet Russia was sealed in 1933, when he won the First All-Union Competition of Performers in Moscow, by unanimous decision of the jury. A nation-wide tour soon followed. The outbreak of war curtailed the furtherance of his career following graduation in 1938, although victory in the Queen Elisabeth Competition in Brussels brought early international exposure. In 1944, Gilels was asked to premiere Prokofiev's *Eighth Piano Sonata*. From 1945 he toured the Soviet Union with Kogan and Rostropovich, and in 1946 was awarded the Stalin Prize. In the early 1950s, Gilels was one of the few Soviet artists to be given permission to perform in the West. His British debut as at the Royal Albert Hall in 1952, and in 1955 he became the first Soviet artist to tour the United States since the 1920s, making his debut there with the Philadelphia Orchestra under Eugene Ormandy. By this time, Gilels had already established an international reputation through his recordings. These reflected his broad repertoire, not only Russian Romantics, notably Tchaikovsky and Medtner, but also a range of Classical-era composers, including Beethoven and Mozart. In his later career, Gilels recorded for many Western labels,

including HMV, Ariola, EMI, and Deutsche Grammophon. Many of his recordings are now considered benchmarks, including the Beethoven and Brahms concertos for DGG, but also the Grieg *Lyric Pieces* and his many recordings of Chopin.

A Professor at the Moscow Conservatory since 1952, he became a respected teacher and judge at competitions and was chair of the jury that historically awarded Cliburn 1st prize at the inaugural Tchaikovsky competition. Gilels maintained an active schedule of teaching, performing and recording up until 1981, when he suffered a heart attack. This cut short an ambitious recording cycle of the Beethoven sonatas. Although five sonatas are missing, that collection remains authoritative, and one the pianist's greatest legacies. **Gavin Dixon, 2024**

David Oistrakh (1908-74) was born in Odessa and commenced his studies at the age of five, making his debut before the public the following year. Initially he studied both violin and viola and between 1923 and 1926 he was a pupil at the Odessa Conservatory. In 1927 Oistrakh played Glazunov's concerto in Kiev under the composer's direction and the next year he played Tchaikovsky's concerto with Nikolay Malko in Leningrad. From 1934 Oistrakh taught at the Moscow Conservatory (over the years his pupils included Oleg Kagan and Gidon Kremer) and in 1937 he won the inaugural Ysaÿe Competition (Queen Elisabeth Competition) held in Brussels. During the Second World War Oistrakh gave many concerts close to the front line and he won the Stalin Prize in 1942. In addition, he formed a trio with Lev Oborin and Sviatoslav Knushevitzky, the three continuing to perform and record together regularly until 1963. Oistrakh was one of a select group of artists permitted to tour outside the Eastern bloc with appearances in Helsinki (1949), Florence (1951), France (1953), London (1954) and the USA (1955) and invitations to return were extended – this concerto was recorded in Philadelphia's Broadwood Hotel in 1960-61. David Oistrakh also developed a successful conducting career and often performed alongside his son Igor (born 1931) as conductor or viola player (ALC 1399 Bach Violin Concertos). Sadly, he suffered his first heart attack in 1964 and consequently made fewer appearances thereafter. Oistrakh passed away whilst on tour in Amsterdam in 1974.

Eugene Ormandy (1899-1985) was born and studied in Hungary, moving to the USA in 1921. His initial career was as a violinist but he first conducted the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1931, replacing an indisposed Toscanini. His major post was as conductor of the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra (1931-6). Ormandy's fame rests upon his role with the Philadelphia Orchestra between 1936 and his retirement in 1980. He averaged about 150 concerts each year and during his career made several hundred recordings. He also guest conducted other leading orchestras and toured worldwide with his orchestra.

Born into a musical family in 1952 (his parents being Leonid Kogan and Elizabeth Gilels), **Pavel Kogan** studied violin and conducting first at the Moscow Central Music School and then at the Moscow Conservatory. At 18, he won the prestigious Sibelius International Violin Competition in Helsinki in 1970 and toured successfully as a violinist before conducting, making his debut with the Leningrad Philharmonic in 1974. He became Musical Director of the Zagreb Philharmonic (1988-90) and since 1990 he has held a similar post with the Moscow State Symphony Orchestra, touring successfully with them worldwide and making several outstanding recordings. He is also a guest conductor with the Utah Symphony Orchestra. Kogan's career has been built around the traditional Russian repertoire but also includes many twentieth century composers including Mahler, Bartok, Schoenberg, Respighi and, perhaps surprisingly, Bernstein and Joplin. His famous Rachmaninov 3rd is on ALTO ALC 1030.

The conductor **Evgeny Svetlanov** (1928–2002) was the unsurpassed authority on Russian Romantic orchestral music in the last decades of the 20th century. From 1965 until 2000, he conducted the USSR State Symphony Orchestra, and recorded an extensive catalogue of Russian music, even claiming once to have recorded 'absolutely all the Russian symphonic music that has ever been written'. Svetlanov initially trained as a pianist and was also active as a composer throughout his career. From 1955, he conducted at the Bolshoi Theatre, and established a reputation for dramatic readings of Russian operas, always to high musical standards. At the time of his appointment to the USSR State Symphony Orchestra, he had already worked with them for ten years, and the collaboration was an enduring success. Svetlanov was able to establish a leading international profile for the orchestra through extensive touring. By the 1980s, Svetlanov had also established significant connections with several Western orchestras leading to appointments with the London Symphony Orchestra, Residentie Orchestra and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. In 2000, Svetlanov was controversially sacked from his Moscow appointment by the Russian culture minister, Mikhail Shvydkoi, who cited the excessive time that the conductor was spending with foreign orchestras. However, three years after his death, the orchestra was renamed in the conductor's honour, and is known today as the State Academic Symphony Orchestra 'Evgeny Svetlanov'.

Conductor **Vladimir Jurowski** began his studies at the Moscow Conservatory, and later went on to study in Dresden and Berlin. He first came to international attention as a conductor of opera, and took up the position of Music Director at Glyndebourne in 2001. In 2006, he was appointed Principal Conductor of the London Philharmonic Orchestra, a position he held until 2021. In 2015 he was appointed Chief Conductor of the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra and in 2021, he became Generalmusikdirektor of Bavarian State Opera. Jurowski has also worked extensively in his native Russia. From 2011 until 2021 he was Principal Conductor of the State Academic Symphony Orchestra of the Russian Federation. He also has a close relationship with the Russian National Orchestra, where he is a member of the Conductor Collegium and has led recordings of Prokofiev and Shostakovich, as well as Tchaikovsky.

Vladimir Ivanovich Fedoseyev (born 5 August 1932, Leningrad, Russia, USSR) graduated from the Gnessin State Musical College 1957, and Moscow Conservatory 1972. In 1971 he was invited by the legendary Evgeny Mravinsky to guest conduct the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra. Such was the success of this concert that many invitations followed and Fedoseyev's conducting career was launched. From 1974 (36 years...) as artistic director of the Tchaikovsky Symphony Orchestra of Moscow Radio. He also served as principal conductor of the Vienna Symphony since 1977. Fedoseyev has particularly championed the operas of Rimsky-Korsakov and the music of Valery Gavrilin.