

RUSSIAN FANTASY

SUNDAY, APRIL 13, 2003 – 3:00 PM
MEANY HALL – UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Judith Cohen, piano
ORCHESTRA SEATTLE
SEATTLE CHAMBER SINGERS
George Shangrow, conductor
Justin Cole, conductor

ALEXANDER BORODIN (1833-1879)
Polovtsian Dances from *Prince Igor*

Dance of the Polovtsian Maidens
Polovtsian Dances with Chorus

George Shangrow, conductor

SERGEI PROKOFIEV (1891-1953)
Piano Concerto No. 3 in C major, Op. 26

Andante – Allegro
Theme (Andantino) with Variations
Allegro ma non troppo

Judith Cohen, piano
George Shangrow, conductor

– Intermission –

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)
Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 47

Moderato
Allegretto
Largo
Allegro non troppo

Justin Cole, conductor

Please disconnect signal watches, pagers and cellular telephones. Thank you.
Use of cameras and recording equipment is not permitted in the concert hall.

Пляска Девушек

Улетай на крыльях ветра
ты в край родной, родная песня наша,
туда, где мы тебя свободно пели,
где было так привольно нам с тобою.
Там, под знойным небом,
негой воздух полон,
там под говор моря
дремлют горы в облаках;
там так ярко солнце светит,
родные горы светом заливая,
в долинах пышно розы расцветают,
и соловьи поют в лесах зелёных,
и сладкий виноград растёт.
Там тебе привольней, песня,
ты туда и улетай.

Общая Пляска

Пойте песни славы хану! Пой!
Славьте силу, доблесть хана! Славы!
Славен хан! Хан! Славен он, хан наш!
Блеском славы солнцу равен хан!
Нету равных славой хану! Нет!

Пляска Чаги

Чаги хана славят хана,
хана своего.

Пойте песни славы хану! Пой!
Славьте щедрость, славьте милость! Славы!
Для врагов хан грозен, он, хан наш!
Кто же славой равен хану, кто?
Блеском славы солнцу равен он!

Пляска Мужчин

Славой дедам равен хан наш.
Хан, хан, Кончак!
Славой дедам равен он!
Грозный хан, хан Кончак.
Славен хан, хан Кончак!

Пляска Девушек

Улетай на крыльях ветра...

Пляска Мужчин

Славой дедам равен хан наш...

Общая Пляска

Пляской вашей тешьте хана!
Наш хан Кончак!

Dance of the Young Maidens

Fly away on the wings of the wind to our native land
O, you, our native song,
to that place where we sang to you so freely,
where things were do idyllic for you and me.
There under the sultry sky,
the air is full of bliss,
there under the murmur of the sea
the hills slumber under the clouds;
there the sun shines so brightly,
our native hills are flooded with light,
in the valleys splendid roses bloom,
nightingales sing in the green forests
and the sweet grape grows.
Fly, my song, upon the zephyrs,
back to home and liberty.

General Dance

Sing songs of praise to the Khan! Sing!
Praise the courage of the Khan! Praise!
Glorious Khan! He is our glorious Khan!
With a blaze of glory equal to the sun is our Khan!
There is no one equal in glory to the Khan! None!

Dance of the Slaves

Prisoners of the Khan,
praise the Khan.

Sing songs of praise to the Khan! Sing!
Praise his generosity, praise his kindness! Praise!
For his enemies he is terrible, our Khan!
Who can be equal in glory to the Khan, who?
With a blaze of glory equal to the sun is he!

Dance of the Men

Equal to the glory of our forefathers is the Khan.
Khan, Khan Konchak!
Glorious Khan, Khan Konchak.
The terrible Khan, Khan Konchak.
The glorious Khan, Khan Konchak.

Dance of the Young Maidens

Fly away on the wings of the wind to our native land...

Dance of the Men

Sing songs of praise to the Khan...

General Dance

A dance for your pleasure, Khan!
Our Khan Konchak!

ALEXANDER BORODIN

Polovtsian Dances from *Prince Igor*

Borodin was born November 12, 1833 in St. Petersburg and died there on February 27, 1897. He began composing his opera Prince Igor in 1869 and continued to work on it until his death in 1887. The Polovtsian Dances from the opera's second act were written in the summer of 1875 and first performed on March 11, 1879 in St Petersburg; the first performance of the entire opera, in a version completed by Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Alexander Glazunov after Borodin's death, took place on November 4, 1890. In addition to chorus and a brief baritone solo, the dances are scored for 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes (one doubling English horn), 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tambourine, glockenspiel, harp and strings.

The illegitimate son of a Russian nobleman, Alexander Borodin studied music from an early age, but his formal academic training in the sciences. He earned a doctorate in chemistry and became a medical doctor, although he never practiced, focusing on a career as a research chemist. Borodin did important work in his chosen field and counted among his colleagues Dmitri Mendeleev, who formulated the periodic table.

Throughout his life Borodin composed in his spare time, often setting aside works unfinished at the end of a vacation period. Despite these frequent interruptions, he was still able to compose a number of works that have found a place in the repertoire, including the 1880 tone poem *In Central Asia* (sometimes called *In the Steppes of Central Asia*), three symphonies (the second of which is especially remarkable and is one of his most performed orchestral works), and a pair of string quartets—the nocturne of the second quartet has gained great fame in arrangements for full string orchestra.

In 1869 Borodin began work on an opera that would occupy him intermittently for the remaining 18 years of his life. Based on a narrative called *The Saga of Igor's Army* by his friend Vasily Stassov, the opera told the story Prince Igor, whose city, Puitvil, was overrun in the year 1185 by the Polovtsi, a Mongol-like nomadic tribe led by Khan Kontchak.

By the end of Act I Prince Igor has been captured by the Polovtsi and much of the opera's second act is comprised by a ballet sequence in which the male and female slaves of the Polovtsi dance to entertain Igor and the Khan. This dance sequence, usually coupled with the "Dance of the Polovtsian Maidens" from Act I (as it is this afternoon), is often excerpted for concert performance. In fact, the "Polovtsian Dances" were first performed separately, at the behest of Borodin's fellow composer, Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov, who prodded Borodin along by orchestrating the "Dance of the Polovtsian Maidens" and assisting with the orchestration of the "Polovtsian Dances."

The dances were achieved their first great success

independent of the opera when Sergei Diaghilev choreographed them for his Paris troupe in 1909. The soaring melody of the first dance achieved even greater fame and popularity when it was used (along with a number of other tunes from other Borodin works) for the Broadway musical *Kismet* for the song "Strangers in Paradise."

SERGEI PROKOFIEV

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

Prokofiev was born April 27, 1891 in Sontsovka, Ukraine, and died near Moscow on March 5, 1953. He began work on his third piano concerto in 1917, using materials dating from as early as 1913, but most of the composition took place in 1921. The first performance was given on December 16, 1921 by the Chicago Symphony under the direction of Frederick Stock, with the composer as soloist. In addition to solo piano, the concerto is scored for 2 flutes (one doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, tambourine, castanets and strings.

With the exception of the fourth concerto (a work of the left hand commissioned by Paul Wittgenstein), Prokofiev's five piano concertos were composed as vehicles of his own prodigious keyboard talents. The composer had begun writing his third concerto in 1916 but much work remained in March of 1918, when he traveled to America via Tokyo, arriving in San Francisco but soon hopping a train for New York when the California authorities took him for a Bolshevik spy.

Prokofiev had previously made the acquaintance of Cyrus McCormick, president of the International Harvester company. McCormick liked modern music and Prokofiev liked machines, so the industrialist told the composer to look him up if he ever found himself in Chicago. On this basis Prokofiev traveled from New York to the Windy City, where the Chicago Symphony played the *Scythian Suite* and the Lyric Opera agreed to mount his opera *The Love for the Three Oranges*. In the summer of 1921 Prokofiev found time to complete his third piano concerto, and he gave the premiere with the Chicago Symphony the following December to rave reviews.

An inveterate recycler, Prokofiev had been collecting themes for the work since 1913, when he jotted down the march tune that would form the basis of the second movement's theme and variations. By the time he sat down to complete the work in 1921, he had before him all but two of the many melodic ideas heard in the concerto.

The first movement opens with a languid clarinet solo, magically blossoming to reveal two clarinets and then all of the woodwinds, before the piano launches into excited sixteenth-note passage that propels the rest of the movement. After the central theme-and-variations movement comes a finale cast largely in 3/4, full of sharp humor and virtuoso passages for the piano. Although all five of Prokofiev's concertos are wonderful in their own right, it is the third that has found a central place in the repertoire.

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH

Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 26

Shostakovich was born September 25, 1906 in St. Petersburg, and died in Moscow on August 9, 1975. He composed his fifth symphony between April 18 and July 20, 1937 in St. Petersburg (then called Leningrad), where the first performance was given on November 21 of the same year under the direction of Yevgeni Mravinsky. The work is scored for 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, E-flat clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, tam-tam, glockenspiel, xylophone, piano (doubling celesta) harp and strings.

Shostakovich was forced to "voluntarily" withdraw his fourth symphony by the Soviet authorities after a single rehearsal; the fifth symphony is the composer's response to that act, a work that—on the surface—told the authorities what they wanted to hear. It opens with an arresting dotted rhythm that will pervade the first movement, which unfolds

Pianist JUDITH COHEN began her keyboard career at the age of five and studied at the Chicago Musical College until the age of eighteen. She was First Prize winner in the 1984 Pacific International Piano Competition, prompting jury chairman Bela Nagy to call her "one of the five best pianists I have heard in the last fifteen years." In 1985, Ms. Cohen made her Community Concerts debut with recitals in Idaho, Washington and Montana, and her international debut with a recital in Mexico under the sponsorship of the Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes. Critic Robert Somerlott of the *Mexico City News* hailed her as "an artist of unusual talent who captivated the audience with both her musicianship and stage presence." Since 1989, Judith Cohen has served as Artistic Director of the Governor's Chamber Music Series, planning and performing in chamber music concerts throughout the Pacific Northwest. She has also appeared at the Abbey Bach Festival, the Second City Chamber Music Series, the Ernest Bloch Music Festival and the Mostly Nordic Chamber Music Series. In 1996 Ms. Cohen released a CD featuring the solo piano music of Béla Bartók. Of this recording, *Fanfare* reported: "On this attractive Bartók collection—in which some of his most popular piano music rubs up against less standard fare—[Cohen] shows herself to be a persuasive advocate for his gentler side...her light, treble-tilted tone and her transparent textures show her

as a series of interrelated episodes that alternate tragedy and anguish with moments of serene beauty. The third movement will have a similar plan, so between the two Shostakovich inserts a scherzo that is equal parts Cossack dance and Mahlerian *ländler*, with biting harmonies and grotesque humor emphasized by the occasional insertion of an extra beat into the 3/4 meter.

After the slow third movement dispenses with the brass entirely, emphasizing strings (the violins divided into three sections instead of the usual two) and episodes for solo woodwinds and harp, the brass come roaring back in the finale, a D minor march that begins slowly but soon accelerates. After a slower central episode, timpani leads into a reprise of the march theme, resulting in a D major finale that was for many years believed to be a conclusion of genuine celebration. But in his 1979 memoir, *Testament*, Shostakovich relates that the rejoicing is forced, "as if someone is beating you with a stick and saying, 'Your business is rejoicing, your business is rejoicing.'"

—Jeff Eldridge

chosen repertoire off to good advantage. Her deft swing through the *Roumanian Folk Dances* is especially refreshing." Ms. Cohen has signed an exclusive recording contract with Pear Records of Los Angeles, who recently released three solo and chamber music CDs featuring her at the piano.

Conductor JUSTIN COLE has studied conducting with Michael Morgan and Larry Rachleff and is a former member of the conducting faculty at Rocky Ridge Music Center in Estes Park, Colorado. He has assisted Mr. Morgan at the Oakland East Bay Symphony and is former assistant conductor of the Orchestra of the Pines. Mr. Cole earned a Bachelor of Music degree in trombone performance from the University of Arizona, where he was awarded the prestigious Presser Scholarship by the School of Music. While in Arizona he received a grant from the University to conduct a concert of 20th century works for chamber orchestra. In 1996 the noted American composer Grace Brown asked that he conduct the world premiere of her work *To Ancient Evenings and Distant Music*. Mr. Cole has studied trombone with Tom Ervin, Gerrard Pagano, George Krem, and William Stanley, and performed with a variety of ensembles, including the Rapides Symphony Orchestra, Tucson Jazz Orchestra, Piney Woods Brass Quintet, Northwest Mahler Festival, and Corona Brass Quintet.

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