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CLASSICAL SERIES
SHOSTAKOVICH 8

Saturday, January 26, 2019 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, January 27, 2019 at 3 p.m. 
at Orchestra Hall

KARINA CANELLAKIS, *conductor*
LISE DE LA SALLE, *piano*

Robert Schumann Concerto for Piano and Orchestra
(1810 - 1856) in A minor, Op. 54
I. Allegro affettuoso
II. Intermezzo: Andantino grazioso
III. Allegro vivace
Lise de la Salle, piano

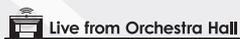
Intermission

Dmitri Shostakovich Symphony No. 8 in C minor, Op. 65
(1906 - 1975)
I. Adagio - Allegro non troppo
II. Allegretto
III. Allegro non troppo
IV. Largo
V. Allegretto

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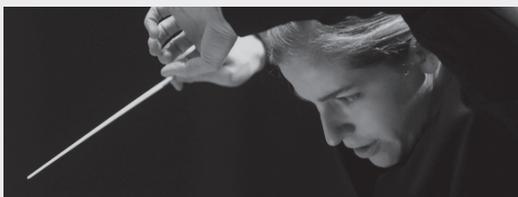


Program Notes

PROGRAM AT-A-GLANCE

CLOSE TO THEIR HEARTS: *Two pieces with powerful personal meaning*

Karina Canellakis's conducting career jumped to lightspeed after a last-minute call to the stage in 2014. Then serving as Assistant Conductor of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, she was asked to fill in for music director Jaap van Zweden, who was injured and unable to conduct.



The piece? **Shostakovich's Symphony No. 8**, an hour-long behemoth full of emotion and tragic energy. Not only had Canellakis never conducted the piece before, the substitution was so last-minute that there was no time for even a single rehearsal.

Lise de la Salle has performed and recorded much of Schumann's extensive piano oeuvre, and she holds his lone Piano Concerto especially dear. "**It is the quintessence of Romanticism,**" she writes. "A piece that makes us travel through all manner of life's emotions!"

In particular, she points to Schumann's obsession with two Romantic "characters" that formed his self-identity: the surging, active **Florestan** and the circular, contemplative **Eusebius**.

Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in A minor, Op. 54

ROBERT SCHUMANN

B. June 8, 1810, Zwickau, Germany

D. July 29, 1856, Bonn, Germany

Scored for solo piano, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, 2 trumpets, timpani, and strings (Approx. 31 minutes)



By the mid-1800s, the piano had grown in range, stamina, and reliability, and the role of the pianist had reached new levels of star power—thanks in part to the boundary-busting piano concertos written by Ludwig Van Beethoven at the very beginning of the century. In the new, post-Beethoven world, the piano was king, and not all composers were capable of writing compelling concertos for the instrument.

Robert Schumann's oeuvre includes dozens of works for piano, but strikingly only one piano concerto. Perhaps the

post-Beethoven question—*where do piano concertos go from here?*—rattled around in his head like it did in those of other composers; nevertheless, he answered it by aiming to reestablish balance between the soloist and the ensemble at a time when pianists often left orchestras in the dust. The A minor piano concerto began as a fantasy for piano and orchestra and was extended into a full concerto at the urging of Schumann's wife Clara.

The first movement is for all practical purposes monothematic, a falling phrase first introduced by the oboe being subtly varied without every losing its plaintive character. Schumann found the way out of the piano concerto impasse by dissolving the barrier between the formal ritornello and the more capricious solo; henceforth, any instrument could speak in any tone of voice.

The rest of the concerto does not comprise two movements, really, but one lengthy span, joined by a ghostly

reminiscence of the first movement. The mood of the Intermezzo is playful and bantering, despite the almost comically passionate second theme. Even more than in the first movement, the piano and the orchestra are partners in a delicately balanced game, in which neither is allowed to run too far ahead.

In the first theme of the finale, Schumann builds a hint of ambiguity between the prevailing 3/4 measure and a 3/2, in which the pace is cut in half. This hint becomes explicit in the second theme, and there is much teasing between piano and orchestra over the sums of *three plus three versus two plus two plus two*.

—Michael Fleming

The DSO most recently performed Schumann's Piano Concerto in November 2012, conducted by Sir Andrew Davis and featuring pianist Andrew von Oeyen. The DSO first performed the piece in March 1919, conducted by Ossip Gabrilowitsch and featuring pianist Eleanor Spencer.

Symphony No. 8 in C minor, Op. 65

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH

B. September 25, 1906, Saint Petersburg, Russia

D. August 9, 1975, Moscow, Russia

Scored for 4 flutes (2 doubling on piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, E-flat clarinet, 3 bassoons (1 doubling on contrabassoon), 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, and strings. (Approx. 61 minutes)



Dmitri Shostakovich spent many of the most productive years of his career under the thumb of the Stalin regime, expected to use his talents for patriotic,

state-approved musical means. He often subverted these restraints, sometimes quite subtly, but today a great degree of nuance is required to understand the composer's intentions from piece to piece: was he willingly complacent with the state, or was he just trying to survive? Did producing music rubber-stamped by the USSR, however cleverly or carefully incendiary, bring him joy—or should it have?

Shostakovich's seventh and eighth symphonies ask these (and other) questions most pressingly, as both pieces were written during the height of World War II. The Symphony No. 7 (commonly called the "Leningrad Symphony") reflects the horror of the two-year siege of Shostakovich's native Leningrad, in which more than 3 million Soviet soldiers and an estimated 1 million civilians died. The symphony evoked not just the brutality of the siege, but Shostakovich's hopeful vision of Soviet victory and ultimate peace—and it earned him huge favor from the government, who named him Honored Artist of the USSR in 1942. By that time, and into 1943, the Russian front had started to turn in favor of the Soviets, and the state expected Shostakovich's Symphony No. 8 to continue his heroic, pro-Soviet streak.

Not so. Rather than a glorious paean to the advance of the Soviet forces, Shostakovich had created a tragic, brooding, epic work that offered little solace for the devastating toll that the war had exacted on the country. Official reaction to the new Symphony was icy: reviews ranged from disappointed to openly hostile; *Izvestia* and *Pravda*, the leading Soviet publications, printed nothing at all on the premiere. It was given again, in Novosibirsk in February 1944 and in liberated Leningrad the following December, but then labeled as

“not recommended for performance” by the government and effectively banned. Today, the symphony is regarded as one of Shostakovich’s most monumental and deeply moving creations, a profound cry against the inhumanity of war.

Biographers Dmitri and Ludmilla Sollertinsky aptly write that “among the Symphony’s five movements, not one brings relief; each is deeply tragic.” The first movement includes two contrasting ideas within its main theme group: a powerful motive driven by stabbing rhythms, and a smooth funeral melody in the violins.

The second and third movements embody different demonic aspects of war: the grotesque military march and the relentlessly pounding machine. The ferocious Allegretto could well be a parody of goose-stepping German storm troopers, while the Allegro non troppo, built from little more than an incessant mechanical rhythm and shrieking woodwind chords, evokes some remorseless engine of battle. The juggernaut pauses for a series of fearsome trumpet calls in

the middle of the third movement, but the mechanistic music returns, and is whipped to an enormous climax out of which emerges a shattering drum roll as the bridge to the fourth movement—a stark, funereal passacaglia.

The finale, which follows without pause, takes as its principal material a gliding, rather innocuous theme offered by the solo bassoon. This is given an energetic working-out until it is interrupted by a threatening recall of the sinister stabbing motive that opened the symphony. The ending, made from the smashed atoms of the bassoon’s theme, is slow and quiet and hesitant. Heroism and victory are forgotten after war’s blast, Shostakovich seems to say. Compassion and exhaustion remain.

—Dr. Richard E. Rodda

The DSO most recently performed Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 8 in November 2003, conducted by Günther Herbig. The DSO first performed the piece in January 1997, conducted by then-Music Director Neeme Järvi (now Music Director Emeritus).

Profiles

KARINA CANELLAKIS

Karina Canellakis was recently appointed Chief Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra, beginning in the 2019-2020 Season. She first made headlines in 2014 filling in for Jaap van Zweden on Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 8 with the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, where she was then serving as Assistant Conductor.



Since then, she made her European debut in 2015 conducting the Chamber Orchestra of Europe, and won the Sir Georg Solti Conducting Award in 2016.

Recent highlights of Canellakis’s skyrocketing career include appearances with the Orchestre de Paris, National Orchestra of Spain, Danish National Orchestra, Bamberger Symphoniker, Los Angeles Philharmonic, Seattle Symphony Orchestra, and many others. She has also appeared at the BBC Proms and in the opera pit with Zürich Opera, Curtis Opera Theare, and others.

Canellakis began her musical career

as a violinist, and was encouraged to take up conducting by Sir Simon Rattle while she played as a member of the Berlin Philharmonic's Orchester-Akademie. In addition to appearing frequently as a soloist, Canellakis played regularly with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and served as guest concertmaster of the Bergen Philharmonic.

Born and raised in New York City, Canellakis now enjoys a busy international career and is fluent in English, French, German, and Italian. She graduated from the Curtis Institute of Music and The Juilliard School, and counts Alan Gilbert and Fabio Luisi as major mentors.

■ **MOST RECENT APPEARANCE WITH THE DSO:** Karina Canellakis has previously conducted the DSO once, in July 2016, for a William Davidson Neighborhood Concert Series program including works by Stravinsky, Barber, Mozart, and Beethoven.

LISE DE LA SALLE

Born in Cherbourg, France, Lise de la Salle began her career at a young age, performing on Radio France at age nine and winning First Prize of the Seventh International Contest of Ettlingen, Germany at 12. She earned international acclaim in 2005, at the age of 16, when *Gramophone*



selected the Naïve CD compilation of her Bach and Liszt recordings as Recording of the Month. Since then, she has appeared with many of the world's leading orchestra, including the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and others. She served as the first Artist-in-Residence of the Zürich Opera at the invitation of Fabio Luisi, who also conducted her London Symphony Orchestra debut in 2016.

de la Salle's recordings for the Naïve label include, among others, a 2003 disc of Rachmaninoff and Ravel, a 2007 CD and DVD with music by Mozart and Prokofiev, and a 2010 all-Chopin recording with Staatskapelle Dresden conducted by Fabio Luisi. In 2011, she released a Liszt recording in connection to the Liszt Bicentennial, which won the *Diapason d'Or* and *Gramophone's* Editor's Choice Award.

At age 11, de la Salle received special permission to enter the Paris Conservatory to study with Pierre Réach. She graduated in 2001 and subsequently enrolled in the postgraduate cycle with Bruno Rigutto. Since 1997, she has worked closely with Pascal Nemirovski and studied with Genevieve Joy-Dutilleux.

■ **MOST RECENT APPEARANCE WITH THE DSO:** Lise de la Salle has previously appeared with the DSO once, performing Rachmaninoff's Piano Concerto No. 1 in April 2016 (cond. Giancarlo Guerrero)

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