



colston hall
classical

**bristol
international
classical season
2017/18**

thu 17 may 2018, 7.30pm

**dresden
philharmonic
orchestra**
a genius revealed





colston hall
classical

0117 203 4040
www.colstonhall.org

tue 29 may, 7.30pm

**city of
birmingham
symphony
orchestra**

out of the deep

Boulanger D'un Matin de Printemps

Debussy La Mer

Mahler Symphony No. 1

Conductor **Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla**

Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla brings a gust of fresh air with her when she makes her highly-anticipated appearance with the CBSO: Lili Boulanger's spring morning prefaces sea-sprayed Debussy and a Mahlerian maelstrom.



welcome



Louise Mitchell
Chief Executive,
Bristol Music Trust

Welcome tonight to the 2017/18 Bristol International Classical Season. This evening the Dresden Philharmonic, under the direction of their eminent Chief Conductor Michael Sanderling, takes on Weber's dramatic overture alongside two emotionally powerful Russian works.

In the first half, we hear Weber's Euryanthe Overture. While Weber's Euryanthe has for centuries been critically condemned in its operatic form for the absurdities of the plot, incongruously, its musical overture is regarded as one of his greatest masterpieces. Performing the music of one of their compatriots, we can look forward to hearing it in its truest form from the Dresden Philharmonic.

From this German overture, we move on to delve into works by two of Russia's greatest composers Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich. Tchaikovsky's triumphant Violin Concerto never fails to leave one feeling exhilarated and uplifted, and it is no doubt safe in the hands of violinist Jennifer Pike. Finally, to close the programme, Shostakovich's Symphony No.5, his best-known symphony, tackles the full range of human emotions.

Next week we will host the penultimate concert of the current season, as the world-renowned City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, along with "Conducting's next superstar" (The Daily Telegraph) Mirga Gražinyte-Tyla in her Bristol debut, pays us a visit. Together, they bring the rare treat of a work by Lili Boulanger, alongside an evocative programme of Debussy and Mahler. I hope that you can join us for this highly-anticipated concert.

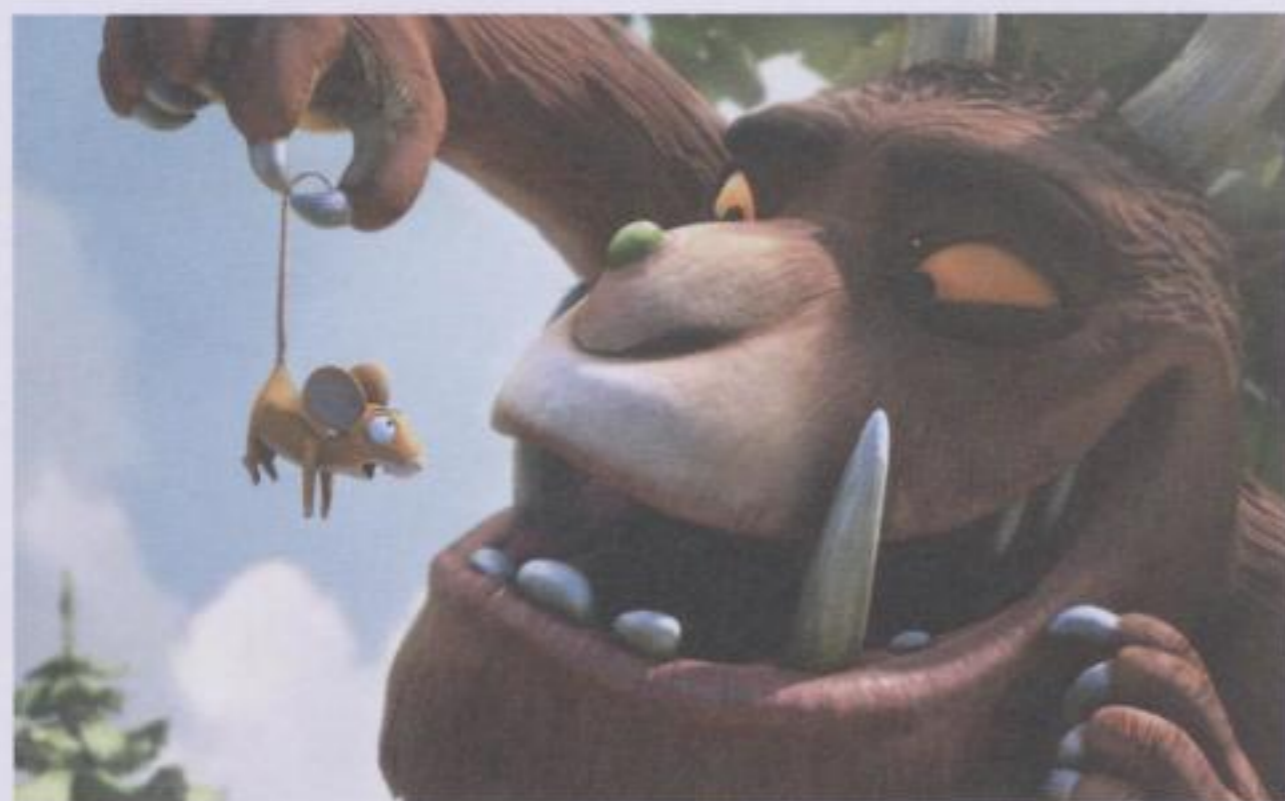
With only a couple more opportunities to witness a live orchestra in our iconic 1951 auditorium, I hope to welcome you to the Hall again before it undergoes its ambitious transformation. Enjoy this evening's music!

this season at the hall



rock & pop sun 27 may **justin hayward**

Legendary singer-songwriter and voice of the Moody Blues, Justin Hayward, brings his 2017/18 tour to Colston Hall performing tracks from his recent albums as well as Moody Blues favourites.



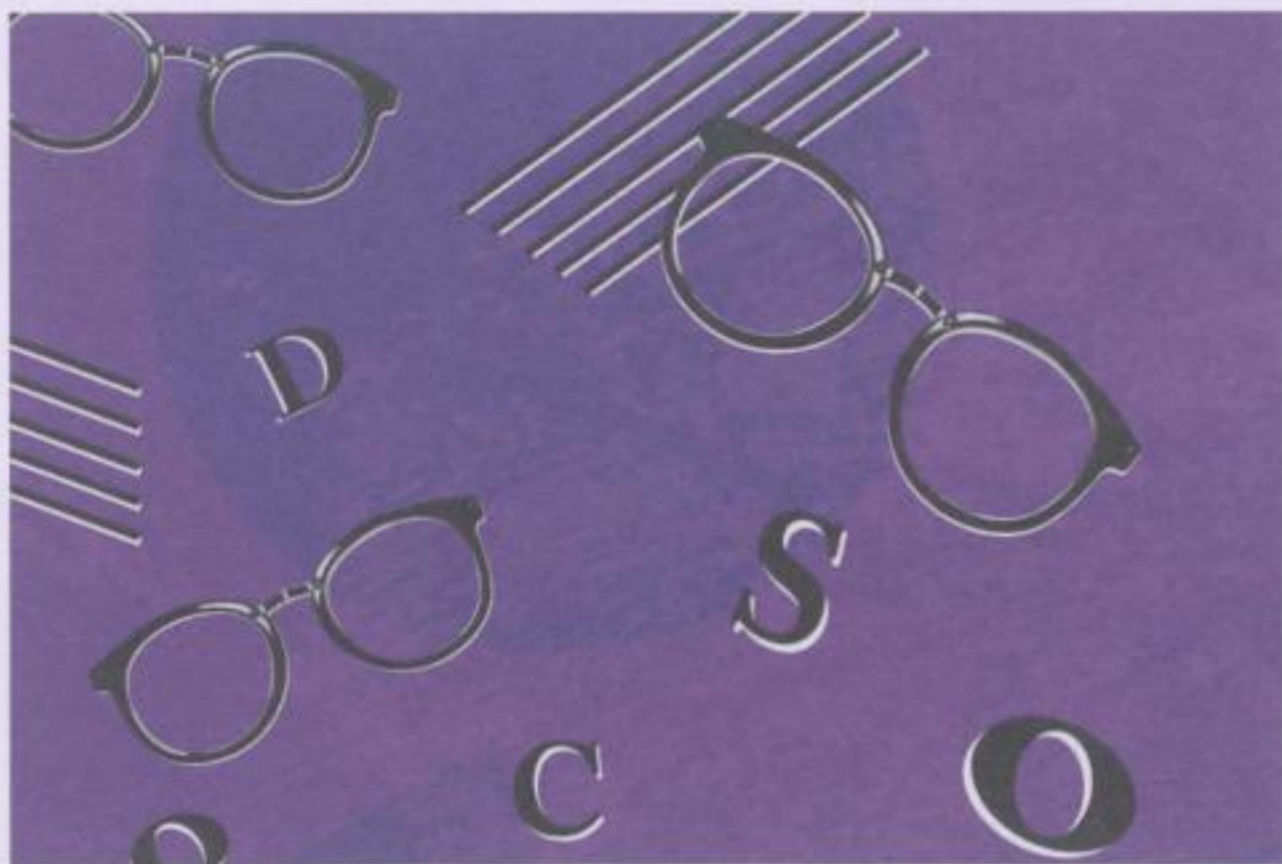
family sun 3 jun **the gruffalo & room on the broom**

Accompanying screenings of the animated TV films, Terry Davies conducts René Aubry's inspired scores for the much-loved children's classics *The Gruffalo* and *Room on the Broom*. Welsh National Opera Orchestra with Huw Davies on guitar.



classical thu 7 jun **bso: heroes & monsters**

Once again the full power of a symphony orchestra is unleashed in a concert packed full of stirring and epic soundtracks from the Silver Screen – this time featuring music from films with monsters galore, whether they be prehistoric dinosaurs, giant beasts from the jungle or the deep, supernatural creatures of the night or psychopathic killers. Conducted by Pete Harrison.



classical
wed 30 may
**stephen johnson &
english piano trio**

Radio 3 presenter, author and music journalist Stephen Johnson gives one of his insightful talks, and English Piano Trio perform Max Bruch's 'Kol Nidrei' for solo cello and Saint-Saëns' Trio No.1 in F – the perfect, intimate mirror to Würth Philharmonic's season farewell on 8 June. Tickets: £8 or £5 incl. bf when bought with a ticket to Würth Philharmonic.



classical
fri 8 jun
würth philharmonic

Musical youth steps up to the plate under the legendary Maxim Vengerov for the final concert before Colston Hall enters its two-year transformation. Searing Shostakovich follows two sizzling canapés and a peerless romantic blockbuster, in a programme featuring works by J Strauss, Bruch, Saint-Saëns and Shostakovich. Conducted by Stamatia Karampini and Maxim Vengerov.



rock & pop
tue 10 jul – sun 5 aug
**river town: bristol's
americana festival**

Featuring some of the best acts from both sides of the Atlantic, including Steve Earle & The Dukes, Graham Nash and Rosanne Cash, River Town hits the road with shows outside Colston Hall at Thekla, St George's Bristol and The Wardrobe Theatre for over a fortnight of live music celebrating the rich sounds of the deep south.

this evening's performance

Programme notes p. 7-11
Profiles p. 12 - 14
Orchestra credits p. 15

Conductor **Michael Sanderling**
Violin **Jennifer Pike**

Weber Euryanthe Overture
Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto
Interval
Shostakovich Symphony No.5



programme notes

euryanthe overture



Carl Maria von Weber (1786-1826) **Euryanthe Overture** (1823)

Programme notes by
Timothy Dowling, March 2018

Weber's opera *Euryanthe* is, unfortunately, a flawed work and most critics have blamed its consequent failure on the weakness of its libretto. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the librettist, Helmina von Chézy, also wrote the drama for Franz Schubert's *Rosamunde*, which was premiered the same year. Schubert's drama also failed as a theatrical experience, and as with Weber's *Euryanthe*, the *Rosamunde* overture remains the only item regularly heard in the concert hall.

However, *Euryanthe* is arguably Weber's masterpiece and it is very regrettable that some of his greatest music remains locked in this largely unperformed opera. Unlike his two other great operas, *Der Freischütz* and *Oberon*, *Euryanthe* contains no spoken dialogue, although there remain clearly identifiable arias, duets, etc.

Various attempts have been attempted at revising the drama to make the storyline more plausible, including by Gustav Mahler in 1903 and then, around the time of the opera's centenary in 1922, by the musicologist Donald Tovey in collaboration with the playwright Rolf Lauckner and the conductor Fritz Busch. Despite these well-intentioned attempts, the opera has essentially remained in a limbo state, although Richard Jones's 2002 production at Glyndebourne conducted by Mark Elder was acclaimed at the time.

The overture gives an excellent example of the quality of the music that we are therefore unfortunately denied. Rather than presenting an overall view of the drama to come, the overture focuses on the doubting hero of the drama, Adolar, presenting him both as the heroic knight and tender lover, with music taken from Act II of the opera. A central passage for reduced muted strings, starting pianissimo and dying away to triple pianissimo, suggests the ghost element of the drama. A brief fugal passage leads to the recapitulation of this sonata-form movement, culminating in a fortissimo statement of Adolar's former tender music, suggesting the eventual happy end to the drama.

Hearing the overture can thus be, at the same time, both exhilarating and frustrating: exhilarating because of the sheer quality of the melodic material, and frustrating because there is so much more music in the drama that remains largely unheard. The only studio recording available was made in East Germany as long ago as 1974, but fortunately it boasts a strong cast with Jessye Norman, Rita Hunter, Nicolai Gedda and Tom Krause, and the Staatskapelle Dresden conducted by Marek Janowski. Listening to the complete opera reveals its powerful influence on the young Richard Wagner: it is hard to see how Wagner could have composed *Lohengrin* without the earlier example of *Euryanthe*. Indeed, it is *Euryanthe* that arguably demonstrates greater consistency through the whole score, with its musical quality remaining of the highest order throughout. Hopefully, as we approach *Euryanthe*'s bicentenary in 2023, an imaginative director can be inspired to unlock its secrets once again.

programme notes

violin concerto



Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky
(1840-1893)

Violin Concerto in D major,
Opus 35 (1878)

1. *Allegro moderato*
2. *Canzonetta: Andante*
3. *Finale: Allegro vivacissimo*

Tchaikovsky travelled to Europe following his disastrous marriage and eventually settled for a period in the resort of Clarens on the banks of Lake Geneva where he embarked on composing his single Violin Concerto. He was aided in this project by the presence of his former pupil Josef Kotek with whom he spent many hours playing through works for solo violin, including Édouard Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole*. This work particularly impressed Tchaikovsky and he wrote to his patroness Nadezdha von Meck of "its freshness, lightness, piquant rhythms and melodic appeal" and so the *Symphonie espagnole* may be considered the main catalyst for his own Concerto. More than anything he appreciated Lalo's concern for musical beauty above everything else and in particular not striving after profundity in the Germanic tradition. Tchaikovsky therefore had this model in mind when he came to create his own masterpiece in the genre.

Composition work was completed quickly – he started on 17th March 1878 and had sketched the entire work by 28th March. However, both his brother Modest and Josef Kotek expressed doubts about the proposed slow movement. Tchaikovsky also shared these misgivings and so composed an entirely new Canzonetta, publishing the discarded movement separately as *Méditation*, the first of three pieces for violin and piano, *Souvenir d'un lieu cher*, Opus 42. Tchaikovsky completed the orchestration of the Concerto by 11th April 1878.

Despite Kotek's major role in its creation, Tchaikovsky decided to dedicate the work to the violinist and composer Leopold Auer (1845-1930), saying to his publisher that he wanted "to avoid gossip of various kinds" and there is the suggestion that there may have been a sexual aspect to his relationship with Kotek.

With echoes of Rubinstein's disastrous initial reaction to his earlier First Piano Concerto, Auer declared the Violin Concerto to be impossible to play and so the work languished for the next couple of years until taken up by Adolf Brodsky (1851-1929) who gave the work its premiere in December 1881 in Vienna under the baton of Hans Richter. The critic Eduard Hanslick (1825-1904) gave the work one of his particularly poisonous critiques, which wounded Tchaikovsky, but there were also more positive reviews. Like Anton Rubinstein before him, Auer later revised his views on the Concerto and went on to be one of its greatest champions.

True to his word, Tchaikovsky's opening movement only pays lip-service to the principles of sonata-form. We can recall Tchaikovsky's unbounded enthusiasm for Mikhail Glinka's brief orchestral Fantasy *Kamarinskaya* (1848), which Tchaikovsky likened to the acorn from which the great oak tree of Russian music would grow; Tchaikovsky decorated his themes accordingly, rather than following the Austro-German principle of thematic development.

programme notes

violin concerto



Like the First Piano Concerto the work starts with a theme that will play no part in the rest of the Concerto, although this introduction is much briefer than that famous opening gambit. The violinist Patricia Kopatchinskaja's reflections on her role in the Concerto (as written in an open letter to her conductor in her recent recording of the work) are particularly apt:

"Would you like to know what I am when the concerto begins? An observer. I stand outside on the street in the cold winter, breathing onto the frozen windowpane. Through a small chink in the hoar frost I spy glittering candelabras, evening gowns, uniforms, colours, splendour and haughtiness. The violin's opening notes are like the first steps of a charming young debutante. She's unsure of herself, bashful, agitated, and at first she almost slips and falls. But slowly, very slowly, she gains in confidence. Gradually she starts making jokes and begins to take wing, a lithe, pure, half-childlike creature, yet soon to be the supreme belle du bal, caught in the delirium of a waltz. In this first movement one must probably be several things in a row and all at once: a fluttery ballerina, a dashing officer, a seductive beauty, a fiery dancer and lover, Tatyana and Onegin."

Like Mendelssohn's Concerto, the cadenza is placed in the middle of the movement and Kopatchinskaja speaks amusingly of it treating us 'to a hiccough and indecent natural noises, the horrified grimace of a shocked critic, to a kiss on the heels of a feline violinist'.

The central Canzonetta opens with an octet for wind setting the scene for the tentative song on muted violin. This leads to a second musical idea which sounds slightly more optimistic in tone but we then return to the haunting original tune, lovingly decorated by accompaniment on flute and clarinet. A bridge passage then takes us directly into the sudden outburst that opens the Finale.

This is unmistakably Russian in character and brings to life a celebratory folk dance at the start and then comprising two further main ideas: the first of these themes is introduced over a drone pedal and droll bassoon accompaniment, the final theme is introduced briefly by duetting oboe and clarinet and is more introspective in mood. These three ideas then dominate the rest of the movement but there is no doubting which theme will eventually win the day as the work moves inevitably to its happy conclusion.

Programme notes by
Timothy Dowling, June 2016

programme notes

symphony no.5



Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975) **Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Opus 47** (1937)

1. *Moderato*
2. *Allegretto*
3. *Largo*
4. *Allegro non troppo*

The ultimate political symphony - a matter of life or death...

Until recent years the Fifth Symphony usually appeared with the subtitle 'A Soviet artist's creative reply to just criticism', with the assumption that these words were penned by the composer himself. It was only made clear in later years that these words were actually written by a reviewer following the first performance of the Symphony in Moscow in 1938.

In August 1934 the Union of Soviet Writers conference discussed the role of literature in the USSR. Later in the same year Sergei Prokofiev (who was just about to return to the Soviet Union) pondered the role of music in the USSR in the wake of the emerging doctrine of Social Realism:

"The danger of becoming provincial is unfortunately a very real one for modern Soviet composers." (Izvestia, 16th November 1934)

The doctrine of 'Socialist Realism' as applied to music remained relatively open until matters were 'clarified' by the dramatic Pravda article on 28th January 1936 'Chaos instead of Music', when Shostakovich's opera Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk was savagely condemned, in an article allegedly penned by Stalin himself. To ensure that the message was unequivocal the article was followed up a couple of weeks later with a similar condemnation of Shostakovich's score for The Limpid Stream.

Surprisingly, Shostakovich's initial reaction was to continue with the composition of his Fourth Symphony and he still had hopes that this would be premiered in Leningrad at the end of the same year, 1936. We do not know at what point in the score of his Fourth Symphony Shostakovich had reached when the Pravda article appeared; it is possible that he may well have had the whole Symphony in mind when he started work in 1935, but one cannot help wondering if the stark, bleak coda was composed in response to the savage criticism.

From its earliest years, however, the Fifth was admired purely as a musical masterpiece and, whilst we might be horrified by the condemnation that Shostakovich experienced in 1936, there is no doubt that this did result in a thorough personal reflection on the future direction of the Symphony in Shostakovich's oeuvre.

It is difficult to think how he might have progressed following the Fourth Symphony without this period of enforced reflection and we can be reasonably sure that the subsequent 'simplification' of his musical language helped ensure his enduring popularity.

We can marvel at the purely musical mastery in the Fifth, how tender musical themes presented at the start of the first movement are transformed into brutal marches in the central development.

programme notes

symphony no.5



His use of the orchestra remains distinctive, the brutality of the central section emphasized by the use of low braying horns, playing well out of their comfort zone.

Any suggestions of irony or ambivalent emotions are completely absent when we reach the third movement Largo, the heart of the Fifth, its tragic lament in the key of F sharp minor. It is fully understandable why many present at the work's premiere in November 1937 wept openly when hearing this music. Shostakovich showed himself to be truly in tune with the feelings of the people who had all been affected by anxiety, fear and loss during the Great Terror.

The coarse interruption of the Finale completely shatters the mood of the preceding Largo, but prepares the way well for the conclusion of this dramatic Symphony; it starts with excitement and brutal energy, before giving way to the central reflective section that culminates in the aforementioned Pushkin quotation.

And so to the ending. Volkov has already quoted Shostakovich allegedly referring to the forced celebration at the coronation scene in Mussorgsky's Boris Godunov. But there is a Russian tradition of ambivalent endings and most markedly so with Tchaikovsky: Tchaikovsky's explanation (in a letter to Nadezhda von Meck) of his Fourth Symphony's finale is strangely apt for Shostakovich:

"The fourth movement. If within yourself you find no reasons for joy, look at others. Go among the people. Observe how they can enjoy themselves. Surrendering themselves wholeheartedly to joyful feelings."

(letter to Nadezhda von Meck, 1877, as quoted in David Brown's Tchaikovsky, Volume II: The Crisis Years)

Shostakovich's Fifth culminates with a combination of woodwind and strings playing the dominant note A no less than 252 times. After 1979, the interpretation of these repeated notes has changed dramatically. Rostropovich slowed down markedly with subsequent performances: his 2002 recording of the Finale with the LSO taking 2½ minutes longer than Mravinsky's 1975 performance. This reflects his view that "the strident repeated notes at the end of the symphony are like the stabbing strokes of a spear thrust into the wounds of a tormented man".

Alternatively, we might also hear echoes of the closing bars of Mahler's Third Symphony with the same slow thumping out of the tonic-dominant D and A on timpani taking us to the conclusion. Perhaps this too reflects Shostakovich's hope for the ultimate victory of love, with its memories of Mahler's depiction of 'What Love Tells Me'.

It will always be very difficult to separate this great Symphony from its political associations, but its triumph of personal survival in challenging circumstances will surely continue to resonate.

Programme notes by
Timothy Dowling, November 2016

profile

Michael Sanderling conductor



Michael Sanderling, one of the most distinguished conductors of our time, has been the principal conductor of the Dresden Philharmonic since 2011.

The high point of the season was, when in April 2017 the Dresden Philharmonic moved into the newly renovated concert hall at the Kulturpalast. The inaugural performance marking the re-opening of the venue was conducted by Michael Sanderling and featured songs of Franz Schubert (soloist Matthias Goerne), Julia Fischer performing as soloist in the Johannes Brahms Violin Concerto, and the iconic finale, "Ode to Joy," from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony.

Beside this position, he is guest conductor of renowned orchestras such as the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, the Munich Philharmonic, the Konzerthausorchester Berlin, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, the Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra, the Tchaikovsky Symphony Orchestra of Moscow, the Czech Philharmonic, the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and the German Radio Symphony Orchestras of WDR and SWR.

With the Dresden Philharmonic, Michael Sanderling regularly undertakes concert tours in Asia, South America, the U.S.A., Spain, the United Kingdom, Austria, Switzerland and Germany.

In cooperation with SONY Classical, since 2015 a CD recording of all the symphonies by Ludwig van Beethoven and Dmitri Shostakovich is being produced under Michael Sanderling's leadership. As of now, the first two CDs of the series have been released, marking a new chapter in the discography of the Dresden Philharmonic.

Born in Berlin, Michael Sanderling is one of the few people who, after playing in an orchestra, has been able to achieve a highly successful career as conductor. In 1987, at the age of 20, he became solo cellist of the Gewandhausorchester Leipzig under Kurt Masur and, from 1994 to 2006, he held the same position in the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra. As soloist, he gave guest performances with ensembles including the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and the Orchestre de Paris. As a cellist however, he stopped performing a long time ago.

Michael Sanderling first graced the conductor's stand at a concert of the Kammerorchester Berlin in 2000 – and caught fire. Having been familiar with the art of conducting from a young age, as son of the legendary Kurt Sanderling, Michael Sanderling took on more and more conducting roles, and was named the Principal Conductor and Artistic Director of the Kammerakademie Potsdam in 2006.

profile

Jennifer Pike violin



Renowned for her unique artistry and compelling insight into music from the Baroque to the present day, Jennifer Pike has established herself as one of today's most exciting instrumentalists.

Jennifer Pike first gained international recognition in 2002, when, aged 12, she became the youngest-ever winner of the BBC Young Musician of the Year and the youngest major prizewinner in the Menuhin International Violin Competition. Aged 15 she made acclaimed debuts at the BBC Proms and Wigmore Hall, and her many subsequent Proms appearances include being a 'featured artist' in 2009. She was invited to become a BBC New Generation Artist (2008-10), won the inaugural International London Music Masters Award and became the only classical artist ever to win the South Bank Show/Times Breakthrough Award.

Performing extensively as soloist with major orchestras worldwide, highlights include concertos with all the BBC orchestras, London Philharmonic, Brussels Philharmonic, City of Birmingham Symphony, Strasbourg Philharmonic, Oslo Philharmonic, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Philharmonia, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Hallé, Rheinische Philharmonie, Tampere Philharmonic, Malmö Symphony, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Prague Symphony, Auckland Philharmonia, Singapore Symphony, Nagoya Philharmonic and Tokyo Symphony orchestras. She has appeared as a guest director with the BBC Philharmonic and Manchester Camerata. She made her Carnegie Hall debut playing Vaughan Williams' *The Lark Ascending* with the Chamber Orchestra of New York (also recorded for Naxos).

Eminent conductors with whom she has worked include Jiri Belohlávek, Martyn Brabbins, Sir Mark Elder, James Gaffigan, Richard Hickox, Christopher Hogwood, Andris Nelsons, Sir Roger Norrington, Jukka Pekka Saraste, Leif Segerstam, Tugan Sokhiev, John Storgårds and Mark Wigglesworth.

As a recitalist and chamber musician, Jennifer Pike has collaborated throughout Europe with artists including Anne-Sophie Mutter, Nikolaj Znaider, Adrian Brendel, Nicolas Altstaedt, Maxim Rysanov, Ben Johnson, Igor Levit, Martin Roscoe, Tom Poster and Mahan Esfahani. In 2016 her series of recitals at LSO St Luke's were broadcast on BBC Radio 3. She appears regularly at the Wigmore Hall and in 2017 curated and performed three recitals in one-day celebrating Polish music, including specially commissioned work.

An enthusiastic promoter of new music, she has had many works written for her, including Hafidi Hallgrímsson's *Violin Concerto*, which she premièred with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and Iceland Symphony Orchestra, Charlotte Bray's *Scenes from Wonderland* with the London Philharmonic Orchestra at the Royal Festival Hall and Andrew Schultz's *Violin Concerto and Sonatina* for solo violin.

profile

dresden philharmonic



The Dresden Philharmonic can look back on a 150-year-tradition as the orchestra of Saxony's capital Dresden.

Ever since 1870, when Dresden was provided with its first large concert hall, its symphony concerts have been an integral element of the city's cultural life. The Dresden Philharmonic has remained a concert orchestra to this day, with regular excursions into concert performance and oratorio. Its homestead is the state-of-the-art concert hall inaugurated in April 2017 in the Kulturpalast building at the heart of the historic district. The principal conductor of the Dresden Philharmonic since 2011 is Michael Sanderling. Besides Kurt Masur, principal conductor in the years 1967-1972, his predecessors have also included Paul van Kempen, Carl Schuricht, Heinz Bongartz, Herbert Kegel, Marek Janowski and Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, amongst others.

The musical and stylistic bandwidth of the Dresden Philharmonic is great. On the one side, the orchestra has managed to preserve its very own "Dresden sound" in the romantic repertoire. And on the other, it has developed a tonal and stylistic flexibility for the music of the Baroque and First Viennese School as much as for modern works. Important composers have also taken to its conductor's desk from early on, from Brahms, Tchaikovsky and Dvořák via Strauss through to Penderecki and Holliger.

World premieres continue to play an important part in the programme to this day. Guest performances around the world attest to the high esteem enjoyed by the Dresden Philharmonic in the world of classical music. And the Philharmonic's discography to have accumulated since 1937 is also impressive. A new CD cycle directed by Michael Sanderling and released by the Sony Classical label creates a dialogue between the symphonies of Dmitri Shostakovich and Beethoven.

credits

dresden philharmonic

violin 1

Heike Janicke*
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Christoph Lindemann
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violin 2

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Joanna Szumiel
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Matthias Bräutigam*
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Karl Bernhard von
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oboe

Johannes Pfeiffer*
Undine Röhner-Stolle*
Guido Titze

clarinet

Fabian Dirr*
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Dittmar Trebeljahr
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bassoon

Daniel Bätz*
Jörg Petersen* **
Robert-Christian
Schuster
Mario Hendel

horn

Michael Schneider*
Friedrich Kettschau
Torsten Gottschalk
Johannes Max
Dietrich Schlät
Carsten Gießmann

trumpet

Andreas Jainz*
Csaba Kelemen
Björn Kadenbach

trombone

Matthias Franz*
Thomas Schneider* **
Joachim Franke
Dietmar Pester

tuba

Jörg Wachsmuth*

timpani / percussion

Stefan Kittlaus*
Oliver Mills
Gido Maier
Alexej Bröse
Johannes Hierluksch**

harp

Nora Koch*
Antje Gräupner**

piano / celesta

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