

Programme:

Weber OVERTURE TO EURYANTHE
Tchaikovsky VIOLIN CONCERTO

– Interval –

Shostakovich SYMPHONY NO. 5

Dresden Philharmonic
CONDUCTOR Michael Sanderling
VIOLIN Arabella Steinbacher

CADOGAN HALL

SMOKING:

All areas of Cadogan Hall are non-smoking areas.

FOOD & DRINK:

You are kindly requested not to bring food and other refreshments into Cadogan Hall.

CAMERAS AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES:

Video equipment, cameras and tape recorders are not permitted. Please ensure all pagers and mobile phones are switched off before entering the auditorium.

INTERVAL AND TIMINGS:

Intervals vary with each performance. Latecomers will not be admitted until a suitable break in the performance.

CONSIDERATION:

We aim to deliver the best standards of service. Therefore, we would ask you to treat our staff with courtesy and in a manner in which you would expect to be treated.

Thank you. We hope you enjoy the concert.

Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826)

OVERTURE TO EURYANTHE (1823)

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.

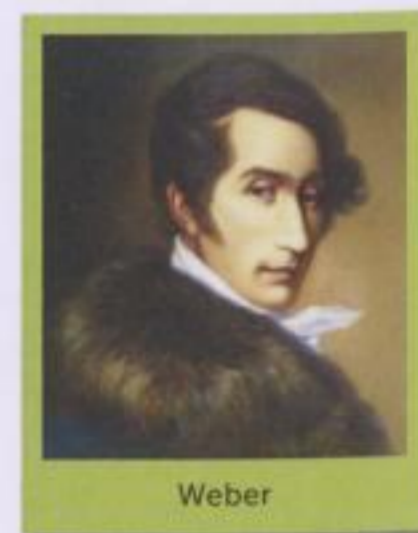
However, *Euryanthe* is arguably Weber's masterpiece and it is very regrettable that some of his greatest music remains locked in this largely unperformed opera. Unlike his two other great operas, *Der Freischütz* and *Oberon*, *Euryanthe* contains no spoken dialogue, although there remain clearly identifiable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



Weber