Symphony Series 7

Exhilaration

Thu 13 & Fri 14 Oct Adelaide Town Hall



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Adelaide Symphony Orchestra

Teresa Riveiro Böhm

Alexander Gavrylyuk

Conductor

Piano

Symphony Series 7

Exhilaration

Thu 13 & Fri 14 October Adelaide Town Hall

Acknowledgement of Country	[2'30"]
Buckskin & Goldsmith arr./orch. Ferguson	
Pudnanthi Padninthi	
Maurice Ravel (1875-1937)	[16′]
<i>Mother Goose</i> – Suite	
Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty	
Tom Thumb	
Laideronnette, Empress of the Pagodas	
Conversations of Beauty and the Beast	
The Fairy Garden	
Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953)	[16′]
Piano Concerto No.1 in D flat, Op.10	
Allegro brioso – Andante assai – Allegro scherzando	
INTERVAL	
Grażyna Bacewicz (1909-1969)	[6']
Overture	
Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971)	[31']
<i>The Firebird</i> – Suite (1945)	
Introduction – Prelude, Dance of the Firebird and Variation	
Pantomime I	
Pas de deux (The Firebird and Ivan Tsarevitch)	
Pantomime II	
Scherzo (Dance of the Princesses)	
Pantomime III	
Round Dance of the Princesses (Khorovod)	
Infernal Dance	
Berceuse (Lullaby)	
Final Hymn	

Duration Approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes, including a 20 minute interval

Listen Later ABC Classic is recording this concert for later broadcast. You can hear it again at 1pm on Tuesday 14 November.

Classical Conversation Join us at the Meeting Hall (located just behind Adelaide Town Hall) one hour before each concert for our free *Classical Conversations* and hear from conductor Teresa Riveiro Böhm and oboist Celia Craig, discussing the music in tonight's program and Teresa's career as an emerging conductor.



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Welcome

As we get ready to enjoy another evening of superb musicmaking by the ASO, it's appropriate to pay tribute to the person who has led the organisation, for nearly ten years, with so much energy and commitment – Vincent Ciccarello. Vincent said farewell to the ASO at the end of September, fittingly just a few days after the final notes rang out on *Beethoven: The Symphonies*, one of the many landmark projects which took place during his tenure. When you think of the Orchestra's 2019 tour to China and South Korea, the 2021 *Festival of Orchestra* and the richness of the forthcoming 2023 season, you see the exceptional qualities of Vincent's leadership. He will always hold a special place in the organisation's heart, and we wish him only the best in his future endeavours.

Speaking of the recently announced 2023 season, it includes performances of huge appeal, whether you're a long-time concertgoer or just starting your journey into the world of orchestral music. From *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix in Concert* to the special four-concert series *Rachmaninov: The Piano Concertos*, there is music to move, inspire and surprise you – I do hope you can join us. You'll find full season details on our website.

In the meantime, for tonight's program it's my pleasure to welcome back pianist Alexander Gavrylyuk and to welcome – for her first appearance with us – the Austrian-Spanish conductor Teresa Riveiro Böhm. What a wonderful year of concerts the ASO is presenting to us; I'm sure tonight's performance will be no exception.

My best wishes for your enjoyment of Exhilaration.



Andrew Daniels Chair



Teresa Riveiro Böhm Conductor



Alexander Gavrylyuk Piano

Austrian-Spanish conductor Teresa Riveiro Böhm is rapidly gaining the attention of orchestras and opera companies internationally. In September 2022 she was announced as the Associate Conductor of Welsh National Opera, and as the Associate Conductor of the Barcelona Symphony Orchestra, for the 22/23 season. Riveiro Böhm won the Neeme-Järvi-Prize at the Gstaad Menuhin Festival in 2019.

The 22/23 season sees Riveiro Böhm begin her position with the Welsh National Opera with an orchestral concert featuring Dame Sarah Connolly, before conducting six performances in their new production of Magic Flute. Other highlights of her 22/23 season include her Australian debut with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, her Spanish debut with the Barcelona Symphony Orchestra, and returns to the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra for main series performances in Glasgow and Ayr.

Other previous and upcoming invitations include engagements with the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, where she was praised for her "confident precision" and "inspirational openness" (ArtsDesk), the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, L'Orchestre de Chambre de Genève, Orquesta Filarmónica de Málaga, the Aalborg Symphony Orchestra, and the Red Note Ensemble.

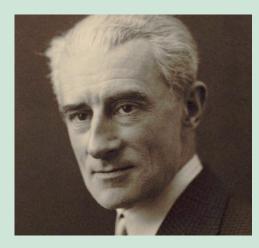
In previous seasons Riveiro Böhm received the first prize at the Dichler Wettbewerb in Vienna and the first orchestra prize from the Savaria Symphony Orchestra. A stunningly virtuosic pianist, Alexander is internationally recognised for his electrifying and poetic performances.

Born in Ukraine in 1984 and holding Australian citizenship, Alexander began piano studies at the age of seven and gave his first concerto performance two years later. At the age of 13, Alexander moved to Sydney where he lived until 2006. He won First Prize and Gold Medal at the Horowitz International Piano Competition (1999), First Prize at the Hamamatsu International Piano Competition (2000), and Gold Medal at the Arthur Rubinstein International Piano Masters Competition (2005).

He has since gone on to perform with many of the world's leading orchestras, including the New York, Los Angeles, Czech, Warsaw, Moscow, Seoul, Israel and Rotterdam Philharmonics, collaborating with conductors such as Vladimir Ashkenazy, Herbert Blomstedt, Valery Gergiev, Neeme Järvi, Sir Mark Elder and Osmo Vänska. As a solo recitalist Alexander has played in the world's major venues; he also performs regularly with his recital partner Janine Jansen throughout Europe.

Alexander is Artist in Residence at Chautauqua Institution, where he leads the piano program as an artistic advisor. He supports a number of charities including Theme and Variations Foundation, which aims to support and encourage young, aspiring Australian pianists; and Opportunity Cambodia, which has built a residential educational facility for Cambodian children.

Alexander Gavrylyuk is a Steinway Artist.



Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty Tom Thumb Laideronnette, Empress of the Pagodas Conversations of Beauty and the Beast The Fairy Garden

Maurice Ravel (1875–1937) *Mother Goose* – Suite

The Mother Goose Suite (Ma mère l'Oye, a set of five piano pieces for four hands) expressed Ravel's affection for two young children, to whom he dedicated the music. In 1911 Ravel orchestrated the suite, and later turned the music into a ballet, first performed in 1912. The title Mother Goose, and most of the stories, were taken from a 1697 collection of fairy tales by Charles Perrault.

Pavane of the Sleeping Beauty is only 20 bars long. You can easily imagine the sleeping princess in the woods, and perhaps the sorrow of the courtiers as they contemplate her. In *Tom Thumb* (*Petit Poucet*), the changes in direction of the accompaniment, joined by solo oboe, depict Tom's efforts to retrace his path by following the breadcrumbs he had scattered on his way, and the chirruping of the birds (who had eaten the breadcrumbs) is suggested not only by the woodwind, but by a solo violin playing harmonics.

Laideronnette, Empress of the Pagodas is a former princess who has been made ugly by a wicked witch – hence her name, which means 'Ugly Little Girl'. With a Green Serpent who had once been a handsome prince, she has sailed to the land of the Pagodas, tiny people who look like articulated figurines, with bodies made of jewels and porcelain. Here the two travellers are restored to their former appearance and married. In the scene Ravel depicts, the Empress is in her bath, with the Pagodas singing and playing their miniature instruments: 'theorbos made of walnut shells' and 'viols made of almond shells'.

In Conversations of Beauty and the Beast, the voice of Beauty is represented by the clarinet and that of the Beast by the contrabassoon. This slow waltz is a tribute to Erik Satie, composer of the *Gymnopédies*. The suite closes with *The Fairy Garden*, where, in the ballet version, Prince Charming finds the Princess asleep. As the sun rises, she awakens; there is a joyous fanfare as the other characters gather around her and the Good Fairy blesses them all.

Symphony Australia © 2003

Performance History

Bernard Heinze conducted the ASO's first complete performance of Ravel's *Mother Goose* suite at a Youth Concert in June 1955. Benjamin Northey conducted the Orchestra's most recent performance, which was given as part of an Adelaide Guitar Festival gala in August 2016.



Allegro brioso – Andante assai – Allegro scherzando

Sergei Prokofiev (1891-1953) Piano Concerto No.1 in D flat, Op.10

Alexander Gavrylyuk Piano

In 1914 a 23-year-old pianist walked onto the stage of the St Petersburg Conservatoire for his final examination. He had received a poor rating for composition but did not especially mind (many of his classes he considered a complete waste of time). When it came to performance, however, he was resolved to win a first on piano, the Rubinstein Prize no less.

Implementing his own strategy in the absence of his regular teacher, Prokofiev was convinced he could win. The unique plan hinged on performing a concerto of his own. 'While I might not be able to compete successfully in performance of a classical concerto,' he later wrote, 'there was a chance that my own might impress the examiners by its novelty of technique; they simply would not be able to judge whether I was playing it well or not! On the other hand, even if I did not win, the defeat would be less mortifying since no one would know whether I lost because the concerto was bad or because my performance was faulty.'

By the time of the examination, Prokofiev had written two piano concertos. He chose the First,

claiming that 'the Second would have sounded too outlandish within the Conservatoire walls'. Even so, the First created a stir of its own. Initially the examiners would not allow the concerto, finally conceding on condition that Prokofiev provide 20 copies of the piano score a week before. With the assistance of the publisher Jurgenson, the condition was met. 'When I came out on the stage,' wrote Prokofiev, 'the first thing I saw was my concerto spread out on 20 laps – an unforgettable sight for a composer who has just begun to appear in print!'

After a dazzling performance and a long and stormy adjudication session, Prokofiev won, although Glazunov, chairman of the examiners, 'flatly refused to announce the results of the voting, which, he declared, encouraged a "harmful trend".' In the end he read the announcements in a flat, toneless mumble – but the 'harm' was already done, although not as Glazunov envisaged it. Prokofiev-thepianist was soon to surrender to Prokofiev-thecomposer, equally authoritative and virtuosic. The results of any competition will provoke mixed reactions; similarly the critical response to the First Concerto ranged from admiration of its stylistic novelty and energetic rhythms to claims that it sounded 'like a lot of lunatics racing about'.

Yet for all its youthful energy, the First Piano Concerto (written in 1911) shows remarkable maturity in both style and structure. Prokofiev himself described it as his 'first more or less mature composition as regards conception and fulfilment'.

It began life as a single-movement concertino. A cursory listening suggests that Prokofiev adopted the traditional three-movement concerto structure as the music metamorphosed into something much longer, and certainly more difficult. Closer listening, however, reveals that his conception of a single-movement work was retained. As writer Joan Chissell observes, 'the uncommon formal interest in the concerto is to be found in the compression of all the elements of an extended concerto within one succinct movement'.

The concerto indulges in mercurial shifts of mood and tempo, from the opening grandeur of the *Allegro brioso* and its perky second theme to the nostalgia of the *Andante assai*. The glue holding these apparently episodic sections together is the exultant main theme that begins the concerto. The solo writing features all the gestures of which Prokofiev-the-pianist was so fond: massive chordal effects, wide, angular leaps, relentless octave passages and rapid legato runs. But for all its brittle virtuosity the concerto is no mere bravura showpiece. The balance between piano and orchestra is cleverly judged and the parts integrated to the point, claimed Prokofiev, where the solo part is 'less interesting for the performer'!

The maturity to which Prokofiev referred is to be found not just in his grasp of structure and his combination of piano and orchestra but in the clearly recognisable stylistic gestures that mark the language of Prokofiev-the-composer. Even in this early work Prokofiev was building his style on four 'basic lines' that he himself identified: a classical approach to structure; piquant harmonies searching for expressive effect; rhythmic momentum; and a reflective lyricism based on an unerring melodic instinct. Yet for all its maturity and assurance, Prokofiev's First Piano Concerto remains a work of 'youthful genius'. As Prokofiev-the-pianist proved in 1914, its high spirits, energy and compelling charm are truly winning.

Yvonne Frindle © 1997

Performance History

Roger Woodward was soloist in the ASO's first performance of Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 1, in a Youth Concert conducted by Helen Quach in April 1969. The Orchestra's most recent performance took place as part of a Young Performers Awards final in September 1997, in which the soloist was Daniel Hill and the conductor Nicholas Braithwaite.

ASO & Tynte perfect harmony 30 years flowers and music







Image: Archive PL/Alamy

Grażyna Bacewicz (1909–1969) Overture

Bacewicz began her musical education at home with her father in Łódź and then moved to the Warsaw Conservatory. A member of her otherwise allmale composition cohort, put out by her presence, accosted her: 'Lady, have you lost your way? It's a class of composition here!' Undeterred, her talent and hard work were soon rewarded. At age 23, she won a scholarship to study in France where, like so many 20th century composers, she was taught by Nadia Boulanger. Bacewicz's Neo-Classical style surges by weaving numerous energetic parts, and is most effective at rapid tempos. These compositional strengths were perfectly matched to her double life as a violinist and pianist. From her solo concerti and chamber works, which she often premiered herself, to orchestral pieces such as her Concerto for String Orchestra, Bacewicz wrote the definitive works of Polish Neo-Classicism.

Both the Nazi and Soviet regimes which occupied Poland during the 1940s exploited the link between music and the nation, particularly the Nazi ban on Polish music. This censure necessitated a musical underground, of which Bacewicz played an important part. While musical resistors risked much to perform their music, assembling an orchestra for an illegal premiere of this Overture was impossible; so its first performance took place in Kraków after the war (1945), a city spared the worst of war's ravages. The piece opens with the Morse Code pattern for V, three dots and a dash struck on the timpani. This same rhythmic unit begins Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, which famously introduced British wartime radio broadcasts as 'V for Victory'. The strings provide a motor for the piece, with the woodwinds initially punctuating their swooping gestures. The brass section announces an intensifying variation on the motif before everything gradually quietens. While the strings are momentarily snuffed, the woodwinds transform the motif again, this time into a lyrical triplet, creating a pastoral air. The piece is worked back to blistering intensity through short episodes in which sections of the orchestra appear as if spotlit. This might not be the music you expect to hear from an occupied city, however the inherent hope of composing amidst catastrophe prompts consideration of process and not only content. That is, the dedication of Bacewicz to her craft in defiance of political realities.

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Performance History

This is the ASO's first performance of Bacewicz's Overture.



Introduction – Prelude, Dance of the Firebird and Variation Pantomime I Pas de deux (The Firebird and Ivan Tsarevitch) Pantomime II Scherzo (Dance of the Princesses) Pantomime III Round Dance of the Princesses (Khorovod) Infernal Dance Berceuse (Lullaby) Final Hymn

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971) *The Firebird* – Suite (1945)

The Russian fairy-tale world was irresistibly exotic to European audiences in the early 20th century, so for the 1910 Paris season of the Ballets Russes, artistic director Sergei Diaghilev commissioned Anatoly Liadov to compose a score to a scenario by choreographer Mikhail Fokine.

When Liadov failed to deliver, Diaghilev turned to the 28-year-old Stravinsky. The ballet would be the largest single piece composed by Stravinsky to date, and would require what the composer in retrospect derided as 'descriptive' music, composed to a scenario not of his choosing, and with a deadline that was frighteningly close. But such things concentrate the mind wonderfully, and in *The Firebird*, Stravinsky emerges as a major composer of the 20th century, while bringing to a radiant close the Russian Romantic tradition.

In 1919, Stravinsky created a suite which would be attractive to concert promoters in its brevity and smaller orchestration. So it proved, but US copyright law meant that he had no legal rights over his work in the country to which he emigrated at the start of World War II. So it was that in 1945 he revisited the 1919 Suite, extending it so that he could re-copyright the work.

Fokine's original scenario for the ballet brings together characters from three strands of Russian folklore: the Firebird – a phoenix; Kashchei the Deathless, a demon attended by monsters, who abducts maidens and turns knights to stone; and Ivan Tsarevich, who personifies a nationalist, indeed imperial, heroism. Stravinsky, in later life, made no secret of his dislike for Fokine and his scenario, in the latter case because of what Stravinsky regarded as dramatic 'padding' that obliged him to write the dance equivalent of recitatives - 'pantomimes'. The 1945 revision allowed the composer to reintroduce enough such narrative material as to make the work viable on stage; indeed, this was the version used by George Balanchine when he revised The Firebird for the New York City Ballet in 1949. The composer himself preferred this suite to the original ballet, which he described as 'too long and patchy'.

The story begins in the enchanted forest that surrounds Kashchei's castle. The *Introduction* begins in the sepulchral depths of the orchestra, rising to fluttering wind figurations and a fragmentary, plaintive oboe solo. The Firebird's dance, as she enters pursued by Ivan Tsarevich,



Tamara Karsavina as The Firebird in the first production of the ballet in 1911.

is a spritely waltz clothed in brilliant orchestral colour that dissolves into scurrying flute textures as Ivan captures her (*Pantomime I*). The Firebird begs for her freedom in a slow dance (*Pas de deux*) whose main melody is first heard in the violas and bassoon, and promises to come to his aid should he ever require it; as a token of her promise she gives him a plume from her tail. Moving deeper into the forest, Ivan finds himself in the garden of Kashchei's castle. Thirteen princesses appear (*Pantomime II*) and play a game with golden apples (*Scherzo*); Ivan, enchanted by the thirteenth princess's beauty, reveals his presence (*Pantomime III*) and they all perform a stately round-dance (*Khorovod*) to a Russian folk-tune.

Kashchei's monsters appear, capturing Ivan as Kashchei arrives. The monsters attempt to turn Ivan to stone in the face of the princesses' pleas for mercy. Ivan summons the Firebird, who casts a spell on the monsters. An exhilarating Infernal Dance to acrobatic trumpet calls, woodwind trills and clattering xylophones, follows. The Firebird dances a Berceuse, or Iullaby, putting Kashchei and the monsters into a magic sleep and telling Ivan that he must destroy the egg in which Kashchei keeps his soul. As Kashchei awakes, Ivan does so, thus destroying the evil demon and plunging his world into profound darkness. In the single-movement finale, a long-breathed melody passed from solo horn through the full orchestra announcing the destruction of evil and the reawakening of the knights whom Kashchei had turned to stone. Ivan, naturally, marries the thirteenth princess in music of great ecstasy.

Gordon Kerry © 2009/13

Performance History

The first ASO performance of the Suite from *The Firebird* (1919 version) was given in May 1951, under Joseph Post's direction. The Orchestra's first performance of the 1945 suite took place in a Youth Concert in August 1966, conducted by Thomas Mayer. Most recently, the Orchestra played the 1945 suite in November 2018, in a Master Series concert conducted by Karina Kannellakis.

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