

Toronto Symphony Orchestra

Sir Andrew Davis, Interim Artistic Director

Wednesday, October 24, 2018 at 8:00pm

Thursday, October 25, 2018 at 8:00pm

Saturday, October 27, 2018 at 8:00pm

Sunday, October 28, 2018 at 3:00pm

George Weston Recital Hall

Andrey Boreyko, conductor

Alina Ibragimova, violin

Nikolai Korndorf

The Smile of Maud Lewis

Felix Mendelssohn

Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64

I. Allegro molto appassionato –

II. Andante –

III. Allegretto non troppo – Allegro molto vivace

Intermission

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Suite from *The Sleeping Beauty*, Op.66a (selected by M. Pletnev)

Introduction

No. 1 Marche

No. 2 Scene dansante

No. 4 Final

No. 5 Scene

No. 6 Valse

No. 15 Coda

No. 18 Entr'acte

No. 19 Entr'acte

No. 20 Finale

No. 8 Pas d'action – Adagio

The Three at the Weston Series performances are generously supported by Margaret and Jim Fleck.

ABOUT THE WORKS

Nikolai Korndorf *The Smile of Maud Lewis*

14
min

Born: Moscow, Russia, January 23, 1947

Died: Vancouver, Canada, May 30, 2001

Composed: 1998

Commissioned by the CBC, and premièred on June 15, 2000, by the CBC Radio Orchestra under Mario Bernardi in Vancouver, *The Smile of Maud Lewis* was among Nikolai Korndorf's final compositions. In a program note, recorded by Don Anderson and published on the Canadian Music Centre website, Korndorf explained that he took as his inspiration his discovery of the work, personality, and artistry of the celebrated Canadian painter Maud Lewis (1903–1970):

"I was most impressed by three things. First, I was fascinated by her art: simple, ingenuous, but very cordial, open-hearted, moving, gentle and full of light. Second, I was struck by the circumstances of her very hard and unhappy life. ... But in spite of that, her art was full of belief in love and it inhales optimism and light. And the third thing, I was enchanted by her smile. In spite of her specific facial features—she did not have the lower jaw—her smile was full of gentleness and affability. ... Maud Lewis's smile, and her art alike, showed that she possessed a lofty, beautiful and rich soul, and therefore I called my piece this name. ... It was one of the most important cultural experiences since my moving to Canada."

Born in Moscow, Korndorf studied composition at the city's famed Conservatory, where he eventually taught musicology, theory, composition, and conducting from 1972 to 1991. He was an active champion of contemporary music; in the 1980s, he

co-founded the Association of Contemporary Music in Russia, with such leading Soviet composers as Sofia Gubaidulina and Alfred Schnittke among its members. In 1991, during the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Korndorf and his family moved to Burnaby, British Columbia, where he continued to be active as a composer and educator.

Korndorf had an encyclopedic knowledge of Western classical music, which he brought to bear in his compositions through, as he described, "an attempt to synthesize elements of different styles and trends, sometimes opposite to each other." Ultimately, his stated aim was "to create monumentalism and sound colour," through rigorous developmental processes.

This piece begins with the violins imitating East Coast fiddle tunes, a sonic reference to the rural Nova Scotia life that was the subject of Lewis's vibrant paintings. Various motifs are slowly introduced and developed through repetition—most notably, a pastoral melody, first played by the piccolo, then flute, and later, an expansive, somewhat melancholy theme presented by the clarinet and French horn. Thickening of contrapuntal texture, mode changes, and volume, build in intensity, ultimately reaching a climax. A joyful new tune emerges, piped by recorder, and then the sparkling sounds of the celeste bring the work to an ethereal close.

Program note by Hannah Chan-Hartley

Felix Mendelssohn

Violin Concerto in E Minor, Op. 64

28
min

Born: Hamburg, Germany, February 3, 1809

Died: Leipzig, Germany, November 4, 1847

Composed: 1844

Mendelssohn wrote *two* violin concertos. One was his very first concerto, a Mozartean work for violin and strings composed when he was 13. The other, this one, was his very last orchestral work, composed in the summer of 1844, on holiday near Frankfurt. The première, on March 13, 1845, in Leipzig, featured the violinist Ferdinand David, to whom the work was dedicated.

Though often regarded as a “conservative” Romantic, Mendelssohn wrote innovative concertos that influenced many later composers. In his two piano concertos from the 1830s, he dispensed with the Classical separation of solo and orchestra; instead, he had the two forces cooperate from the start in presenting and developing ideas. And he asked that all three movements be played without breaks, sometimes with connecting transitions. By the mid-1840s, this model of concerto form was second nature for Mendelssohn, and, in the Violin Concerto, he handled it with new ease and imagination. He even incorporated a cyclical element: the searching *Allegretto non troppo* that introduces the finale unmistakably recalls the mood of the first movement, and even its first theme.

The first movement’s soaring, passionate main theme follows a mere three beats of quiet, throbbing vamp in the orchestra, and is then developed at length. The poignant second theme, in a major key, is strikingly scored: a clarinet (above the flutes) takes the melody

while the violin provides the bass, a sustained tone on its lowest open string, G. The violin then takes the theme, and spins it out with increasing ardour. The concise development section, both turbulent and mournful, leads directly into the solo cadenza, which Mendelssohn, unconventionally, puts just *before* the recapitulation. The recapitulation is shortened but intensified, the coda stormy.

A short but striking transition leads into the slow movement, which is simple in form but profoundly expressive. The principal theme is noble and (in the best sense) sentimental, with the directness of popular song, and the violin develops it, through the whole range of the instrument, in several minutes of unbroken melody. The middle of the movement, with its own theme, is darker, more agitated, and dissonant, and even more intensely expressive; when the opening theme returns (now in a richer setting), it has the effect of a balm.

The scherzo-like finale is pure fairy music—the Mendelssohn of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*. The first theme scampers and flutters; the second is all tongue-in-cheek pomp, like a fairy’s wedding march. The scoring is enchanting, and the two main themes are developed ingeniously in an atmosphere of unrelenting high spirits, though, in the bustling coda, the music also attains real nobility.

Program note by Kevin Bazzana

ABOUT THE WORKS

Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Suite from *The Sleeping Beauty*, Op. 66a (selected by M. Pletnev)

48
min

Born: Kamsko-Votkinsk, Russia, May 7, 1840

Died: St. Petersburg, Russia, November 6, 1893

Composed: 1888–1889

Of Tchaikovsky's three monumental theatrical dance pieces, *Swan Lake* (1877), *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *The Nutcracker* (1892), *The Sleeping Beauty* is performed less often than the other two, but many authorities, including Igor Stravinsky, consider it his finest orchestral achievement in the form. It was commissioned by Ivan Vsevolozhsky, director of the Imperial Theatres in St. Petersburg, who wanted to stage it in the style of Louis XIV, "with melodies in the spirit of Lully, Bach, Rameau and such-like."

The première at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg on January 15, 1890, was met with indifference by public and press—too cool and sophisticated, too "French" for their taste. The tide of opinion turned quickly, though; within a year, *The Sleeping Beauty*'s popularity had soared.

Well before then, Tchaikovsky had raised with his principal music publisher, Pyotr Jurgenson, the idea of creating a *Sleeping Beauty* concert suite. Having done so, though, he couldn't decide what to leave out. It was several years after his death that a five-movement suite was published as Op. 66a (TH 234).

Performed by the TSO in 2003, the 20-minute version is sturdy enough. But not only does this 48-minute version have a more nuanced emotional through-line, it also has an interestingly circuitous genesis of its own. It started life as one of two transcriptions for

piano of Tchaikovsky's ballets (*The Nutcracker* is the other) by Russian pianist, conductor, and composer Mikhail Pletnev, a personal friend of tonight's conductor, Andrey Boreyko, under whose baton this version was premièred. (Pletnev's virtuosic piano arrangement of the suite, performed by him, can be found in the Philips Classics 1998 anthology *Great Pianists of the 20th Century*.)

This suite includes nine sections from the ballet score. The first three (numbered 1, 2, and 4) are all drawn from the ballet's Prologue, *The Baptism of Aurora*, interpolating a dance scene between the opening processional and the famous showdown between the evil Carabos and the Lilac Fairy. We then leap forward to Aurora's 16th birthday celebration.

Sections No. 5 and 6 are a foreboding contrast: the ballet's *Scene des tricoteuses* (Knitting Women) and the *Grande valse villageoise* (a.k.a. The Garland Waltz). The Coda (No.15) then bridges 100 years to act II, scene I, where we meet Prince Florimund out hunting.

Act II, scene II is the narrative climax of the ballet, Tchaikovsky at his dramatic orchestral best. Three consecutive sections (No. 18, 19, 20) of the original score take us from Florimund's vision of Aurora (end of act II), through his arrival at the Castle of Sleep, to the magical awakening that is the story's dramatic climax.

Program note by David S. Perlman

THE ARTISTS



Andrey Boreyko conductor

Andrey Boreyko made his TSO debut in October 2003.

Now in his fifth season as Music Director of Artis—Naples in Florida, Andrey Boreyko's inspiring leadership has raised the artistic standard and brought a new intensity to the Naples Philharmonic. The driving force behind the continued artistic growth of this multi-disciplinary organization, Boreyko has commissioned several new works including orchestral pieces by Fazil Say and Giya Kancheli, and a fantasy for violin and orchestra by Gabriel Prokofiev titled *Olga's Miniatures*. This piece was inspired by an exhibition at Artis—Naples, The Baker Museum featuring the art collection of the great American philanthropist, patron, and collector Olga Hirshhorn. Next season (2019/20), Andrey Boreyko will become the new Artistic and Music Director Designate of Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra.

A popular guest conductor with major orchestras across the globe, Boreyko's 2018/19 season started with a tour with the Filarmonica della Scala and his engagements this season include the Prague Symphony, Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra, Sinfonica Nazionale RAI, Sinfonia Varsovia, and the Seattle, Minnesota, Toronto, San Francisco, and Sydney Symphony Orchestras. Further ahead, he will conduct Salzburg Mozarteum, Rundfunk Symphonie Orchester Berlin, Frankfurt Museumsgesellschaft, and Dresden Philharmonic.

Over the past few seasons, orchestras with whom Andrey Boreyko has worked have included Konzerthausorchester Berlin, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, Berliner Philharmoniker, Gothenburg Symphony, Bamberger Symphoniker, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Münchner Philharmoniker, Staatskapelle Dresden, Leipzig Gewandhausorchester, Wiener Symphoniker, Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Royal Concertgebouw, Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, London Symphony, Philharmonia, and Rotterdam Philharmonic. In North America, he has conducted New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the Dallas and Detroit Symphony Orchestras.

A passionate advocate for lesser-known works, Boreyko championed compositions by Victoria Borisova-Ollas in an extensive concert and recording project with the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra last season. As part of the Prague Spring Festival 2018, Boreyko conducted the Prague Symphony Orchestra in a rendition of Jan Novak's *Dido* and this season conducts Zdeněk Fibich's rarely performed *Vodník*. He returned to Rundfunk Sinfonie Orchester Berlin in February 2018 with a performance of Valentin Silvestrov's *Requiem for Larissa*.

From 2012, Andrey Boreyko was Music Director of the Orchestre National de Belgique, a post he held with great commitment for five years, expanding the Orchestra's activities nationally and internationally, including an annual performance in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw. His first position in Europe was as Chief Conductor of Poznan Philharmonic. He has also held the positions of Chief Conductor of the Jenaer Philharmonie (of which he is now Honorary Conductor),

THE ARTISTS

Hamburger Symphoniker, Winnipeg Symphony, and Berner Sinfonieorchester, and was Music Director of the Düsseldorf Symphoniker (2009–2014).

He received awards for the most innovative concert programming in three consecutive seasons from the Deutscher Musikverleger-Verband, the first in the history of the prize.



Alina Ibragimova **violin**

These performances mark Alina Ibragimova's TSO début.

Performing music from Baroque to new commissions, on both modern and period instruments, Alina Ibragimova has established a reputation as one of the most accomplished and intriguing violinists of her generation. This is illustrated by her presence at the BBC Proms since 2015: along with concerto performances from the standard repertoire, her appearances have included a concert with a Baroque ensemble and two late-night Royal Albert Hall recitals featuring the complete Bach partitas and sonatas, for which *The Guardian* commented, “The immediacy and honesty of Ibragimova’s playing has the curious ability to collapse any sense of distance between performer and listener.” In the 2018 Proms, Ibragimova gave the world première of the Rolf Wallin Violin Concerto with the Bergen Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Edward Gardner.

Over the next season, she will have a strong focus on Shostakovich Concertos No. 1 and No. 2, which she will record with Vladimir Jurowski for Hyperion Records. She looks forward to début engagements with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra (Gardiner), the Toronto Symphony Orchestra (Boreyko), and Minnesota Orchestra, and will return to the London Symphony Orchestra, Chamber Orchestra of Europe (Haitink), Swedish Radio Symphony (Harding), Seattle Symphony (Ludovic Morlot), and Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment (Jurowski). Highlights among recent concerto engagements include débuts with the Boston Symphony, Montreal Symphony, Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Sinfonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Tokyo Symphony, and Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony. She also toured extensively in Australia with the Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, and Tasmania Symphony Orchestras, as well as with the Australian Chamber Orchestra.

Her long-standing duo partnership with pianist Cédric Tiberghien has featured highly successful cycles of the Beethoven and Mozart violin sonatas at Wigmore Hall. Recent engagements included a three-week tour of Japan and Korea, extensive touring of North America, and a Berlin début recital at the Pierre Boulez Saal. Ibragimova is also a founding member of the Chiaroscuro Quartet. Together they have toured extensively since 2005 and have become one of the most sought-after period ensembles.

Her discography on Hyperion Records includes 15 albums ranging from Bach to Szymanowski and Ysaye. Her latest release, featuring the complete Mozart Violin Sonata cycle with Cédric Tiberghien, was referred to as “A set that will become the modern reference recording” by *Gramophone Magazine*. Her next release, Franck’s and Vienne’s Violin Sonatas, is scheduled for autumn 2018.