

CONCERT PROGRAM

October 2-3, 2015

Vassily Sinaisky, conductor
Ingrid Fliter, piano

PROKOFIEV Selections from *Cinderella Suite* No. 1, op. 107 (1946)
(1891-1953)

Introduction
Pas de chat
Quarrel
Cinderella's Waltz
Midnight

CHOPIN Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, op. 21 (1829)
(1810-1849)

Maestoso
Larghetto
Allegro vivace

Ingrid Fliter, piano

INTERMISSION

PROKOFIEV Symphony No. 3 in C minor, op. 44 (1928)

Moderato
Andante
Allegro agitato
Andante mosso; Allegro moderato

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

These concerts are part of the Wells Fargo Advisors Orchestral Series.

Vassily Sinaisky is the Monsanto Guest Artist.

Ingrid Fliter is the Bruce Anderson Memorial Fund Guest Artist.

The concert of Friday, October 2, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Mr. and Mrs. David C. Farrell.

The concert of Saturday, October 3, is underwritten in part by a generous gift from Mrs. Oliver M. Langenberg.

The concert of Friday, October 2, includes coffee and doughnuts provided through the generosity of Krispy Kreme.

Pre-Concert Conversations are sponsored by Washington University Physicians.

Large print program notes are available through the generosity of Bellefontaine Cemetery and Arboretum and are located at the Customer Service table in the foyer.

FROM THE STAGE

Lisa Chong, second violin, on Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, op. 21: "I'm in love with Chopin's Piano Concerto No. 2. Perhaps we were just hormonal teenagers, but my friend and I used to play recordings of both Nos. 1 and 2—the slow movements—and just die and sob over how beautiful they are. I still believe this is music straight from heaven."



Ingrid Fliter induces big emotions from Chopin's F-minor Concerto.

AFTER MIDNIGHT

BY EDDIE SILVA

TIMELINKS

1829

CHOPIN

Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, op. 21
Part I of Goethe's *Faust* premieres

1928

PROKOFIEV

Symphony No. 3 in C minor, op. 44
Soviet Union orders exile of Leon Trotsky

1946

PROKOFIEV

Selections from *Cinderella* Suite No. 1, op. 107
Winston Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech delivered in Fulton, Missouri

A work of art does not remain enshrined within the moment in which it is conceived. A lasting work of art changes with time. It changes because the attitudes of those who perform it and those who perceive it change. When we say a work of art is great, it is because, in part, that work of art has shown resilience to the pressures of time and of shifting points of view. It maintains its relevance outside of its own time, with time bending perceptions and shifting meanings. T.S. Eliot influences how we read Shakespeare. Schoenberg effects how we hear Brahms.

I'll take this a step further. Program notes traditionally tell the genesis story of the music; but art lives unmoored from its beginnings. You and I hear music through complex conduits of time. Art is "unstuck in time," to borrow Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.'s phrase.

I want you to consider this: Chopin's F-minor Piano Concerto is of our time as much as it is of Chopin's. We know it as the work of a young musician, a masterful pianist and composer who departed the provincialism of his homeland for the worldliness of Paris, and who found love, fame, poverty, and death there. All of that is a part of the concerto too, I think, because the music has kept on living, through Chopin, through more than a century of audiences, through recordings, through Ingrid Fliter, through you and me. Or, as Emily Dickinson, a Chopin contemporary, wrote of a word that's said: "...it just begins to live that day."

So, in Prokofiev's Symphony No. 3, composed in 1928, the calamities of the century are given sound; just as in his fairy-tale ballet, the orchestral shriek of midnight ends more than a char girl's fantasy.

SERGEY PROKOFIEV

Selections from *Cinderella*, Suite No. 1, op. 107

THE MEANINGS OF MIDNIGHT We are at a ball and dancing. We should be amazed at glittering jewels and flowing gowns. We should be made drunk by the champagne flutter of romance.

But the music is made of shadows. Fear dwells behind curtains. What is kept beneath the palace floor?

I wonder, what were the meanings of midnight in Prokofiev's life? The Russian native had lived fabulously as a successful composer and pianist in Paris and New York. But the swift trajectory of his early fame diminished, and in came temptation speaking his mother tongue. Prokofiev was lured back from the West by apparatchiks of the new Soviet Union. They promised commissions, fame, and inviolable love from his government and his countrymen.

Prokofiev made his choice. And after that, every promise made to him was broken; every threat came true.

He made other choices too. Sergey separated from his wife, Lina, for a much younger woman, leaving his family more vulnerable to the Soviet terror. After the war, Lina was arrested, tortured, and convicted as a traitor to the State. She survived eight years in the Soviet Gulag.

Prokofiev spent the last years of his life composing patriotic tunes in praise of the Soviet utopia. He died at 61, on the same day as Josef Stalin.

PARALLEL STORIES We all know the story of Cinderella. Here is a parallel story: Stalin makes a pact with Hitler and the Soviet Union is secure. Hitler breaks his pact and Germany invades. Midnight shrieks. Dark forces roll like terrible machines.

Another story: Prokofiev meets a young literature student, Mira, who dotes on him. "In that spring of important changes in his life," biographer Harlow Robinson writes, "Prokofiev escaped—as he had escaped difficult times in the past—into a fairy tale."



Born

April 23, 1891, in Ukraine

Died

March 5, 1953, in Moscow

First Performance

November 12, 1946, in Moscow, Abram Stasevich conducting

STL Symphony Premiere

September 20, 1973, Walter Susskind conducting

Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

November 29, 2009, Ward Stare conducted a Family Concert

Scoring

2 flutes
piccolo
2 oboes
English horn
2 clarinets
bass clarinet
2 bassoons
contrabassoon
4 horns
3 trumpets
3 trombones
tuba
timpani
percussion
harp
piano
strings

Performance Time

approximately 15 minutes

**Born**

March 1, 1810, Warsaw

Died

October 17, 1849, Paris

First Performance

March 30, 1830, in Warsaw, Chopin played the solo part and conducted from the keyboard

STL Symphony Premiere

January 19, 1912, Helena Lewyn was soloist, with Max Zach conducting

Most Recent STL Symphony Performance

September 30, 2012, Emanuel Ax was soloist, with David Robertson conducting

Scoring

2 flutes
2 oboes
2 clarinets
2 bassoons
2 horns
2 trumpets
trombone
timpani
strings

Performance Time

approximately 32 minutes

Is Cinderella an obscure bookish girl longing to be known? Might the Prince, who sees her truly and saves her from ash, be a great conductor?

With the German advance, Prokofiev and his mistress joined other select citizens for evacuation from Moscow. Lina and the sons were left behind.

In the summer and fall of 1943, in Perm, while Lina and their sons endured the siege of Moscow, Prokofiev made his ballet as “danceable as possible,” in response to official government criticisms of *Romeo and Juliet*.

Cinderella waltzes, until midnight.

FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN

Piano Concerto No. 2 in F minor, op. 21

LITTLE TIME Years after the F-minor Concerto premiered in Warsaw, Frédéric Chopin met the scandalous memoirist and novelist Aurore Dupin, known as George Sand, in Paris. She dressed in men’s clothing and smoked cigars. The ill-matched couple loved tempestuously and separated with bitter recriminations. He would die penniless. Thousands attended his funeral, but not her.

What brings such passions together? What did this worldly woman find in this frail, doomed man?

He wrote his first concerto in the fire of his youth. It is insistently musical—no story is told, but drama flares from note to note. (It is called his Piano Concerto No. 2, because it is the second of his two piano concertos to be published, rather than composed. Beethoven’s Piano Concertos Nos. 1 and 2 offer up the same confusion.)

Chopin was a Polish teenager, one already so accomplished that by age 10 critics and audiences were claiming him as their Mozart. Chopin was self-taught, later schooled in technique; but the self-taught are governed by their own rules of invention. Chopin redefined the potential of the piano—its expressivity, its harmonies, its colors. He took the music where he deemed it must go. Any adventurous woman of any age—whether in men’s trousers and smoking a cigar or not—recognizes the appeal of such a man.

The Polish aristocracy gave parties for the young Chopin and lavished attention on him, not unlike that bestowed on the young Mozart by the royal houses of Europe. Also like Mozart, the aristocracy didn't pay Chopin much money.

Chopin took his show to Vienna and found a more responsive audience. He discovered what it was to have fans. When he returned home to Warsaw he played his two concertos and was the toast of the town. "That's more like it," a teenage music star might think; but following subsequent performances, in which the E-Minor Concerto, op. 11, was less-than favorably received, he took his talent and ambition back to the West. Chopin was restless. He was also consumptive, so he was aware of time as only a few young men are.

SINGING MACHINE The concerto begins with a lengthy essay by the orchestra. The piano enters to say, "Let's reconsider all the orchestra has said," and then does so impressively. The dazzling virtuosity on display is constructed around simple tunes, simple tunes being the genesis of the virtuoso's craft. In Chopin's composition, the piano, as one critic observes, is a "singing machine."

If the second movement is your favorite you're in the majority. The first and third movements are the hubbub of life, the getting and spending. The second is the deep, still pond of contemplation, a Wordsworthian walk. (Wordsworth is a contemporary too. We're steeped in the wonders of the Romantic age.) Near the Larghetto's end, a horn joins the keyboard's quiet reverie, setting us adrift on a boat we hope may never reach shore.

Then, politely, the Allegro vivace gentles us back to the business at hand with sprightly keyboard work. The orchestra reawakens and it's time to rise into Chopin's new morning.

Mazurkas are danced along the piano keys. Chopin rewards us with a burst of sunlight after liquid dreams. Horns call, in part to announce the piano's take-off into unknown stratospheres, unimagined speeds. We ride along until Chopin gives us one last lullaby. Then the hullabaloo of the finale, and in the silence, Parisian passions to come.



First Performance

May 17, 1929, in Paris, Pierre Monteux conducted the Orchestre symphonique de Paris

STL Symphony Premiere

January 29, 1982, Julius Rudel conducting the only previous performance

Scoring

2 flutes
piccolo
2 oboes
English horn
2 clarinets
bass clarinet
2 bassoons
contrabassoon
4 horns
3 trumpets
3 trombones
tuba
timpani
percussion
2 harps
strings

Performance Time

approximately 34 minutes

SERGEY PROKOFIEV

Symphony No. 3 in C minor, op. 44

SMOKE IN THE AIR The Russian craze was fading in Paris. A passion for Russian exoticism—which had made the Ballets Russes, Vaslav Nijinsky, Igor Stravinsky, Sergey Prokofiev, and all things Russian such the rage in the late teens and early '20s—was giving way to other fads. Stravinsky, always the strategist, figured as much and remade himself as “neoclassical.”

Prokofiev was stuck with an opera no one would produce. *The Fiery Angel* was full of a Russian savagery that Stravinsky had already exploited with *The Rite of Spring*. By the late '20s, Prokofiev couldn't buy a scandal with his opera.

But he chose not to let the music languish—it was too good. At first he was reluctant to make a symphony out of recycled themes. “People will stone me,” he said, but with some encouragement from Lina he set to work. He chuckled to himself at the idea of “writing a new symphony for free.” In his alpine idyll, Le Chateau de Vétraz near the French-Swiss border, he made his Symphony No. 3, which he would later call “one of my most significant compositions.”

He dropped the narrative of *The Fiery Angel* because he wanted his symphony to stand on its own. This does not deny a pantheistic ferocity left over from the opera, a brute force akin to Stravinsky's *Rite*. And neither does it keep us from hearing the approaching calamities of the century—the symphony embedded with a driving pulse and blistering silences. Prokofiev notoriously neglected the atrocities occurring in revolutionary Russia, it's true, but he was not unconscious of the smoke in the air. He played with fire, believing himself immune.

UNROMANTIC The Third Symphony begins: a relentless pulse, a crash of sound, repeat. Even as these explosive cadences diminish, anxiety pervades. Something is askew. An oboe gives song to a clear-eyed, unromantic tune.

The Moderato is immoderate: strife and struggle, swift contrasts—the most Shostakovich-sounding Prokofiev symphony. Strings rise after a cacophony of brass until the two clash and

hang suspended without a life line. As the critic Richard Scheinen described one performance, after these “full-throated tutti declarations,” what follows are “desultory murmurs” and “abysmal groans ... like the robot’s creaky last step settling to earth....”

A long interlude of woodwinds hold desperately to a single phrase with pizzicati breath. The harps pluck indecorously along.

The music gentles in the second movement with the springtime refrains of Pan, but the anxiety never dissipates. The low strings beat beat beat in agitation. The solo violin utters more screech than song. *Pretty* is not a concept the symphony can accept.

The Russians have a way with woodwinds. Prokofiev reveals their colors, their multiple characters. They sound folkly. They sound urbane. They are both civil and uncivil. They sing the mad cross-wirings of a distressed people.

That anxious pulse, which has twisted its way throughout the symphony, becomes its center. Prokofiev writes 13 individual parts for the strings to form a colloquy—like an eternal hell of bureaucrats. Woodwinds and brass manage to attain a kind of unity, with the trumpet and clarinet uniquely joined. But no sweet harmonies last—threatening drums, a cry of trumpets.

A machine-like beast emerges from silence, then stalls, looming, in terrifying silence. Go find consolation elsewhere.

Program notes © 2015 by Eddie Silva



Mark Rosen

Vassily Sinaisky most recently conducted the St. Louis Symphony in March 2010.

VASSILY SINAIISKY

MONSANTO GUEST ARTIST

One of the great Russian conductors schooled in the tradition of Ilya Musin and Kirill Kondrashin, Vassily Sinaisky is known for his interpretations of Russian, German, and English repertoire. Sinaisky also has a distinguished pedigree as an operatic conductor and, from 2010 to 2013, was Chief Conductor and Music Director of the Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow, where he conducted many acclaimed productions.

Sinaisky's international career was launched in 1973 when he won the Gold Medal at the prestigious Karajan Competition in Berlin. His early work with Kondrashin at the Moscow Philharmonic and with Musin at the Leningrad Conservatory provided him with an incomparable grounding. Soon after his success at the Karajan Competition, Sinaisky was appointed Chief Conductor of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra, a post he held from 1976 to 1987. He then became Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Moscow Philharmonic, leading numerous high-profile projects with the Orchestra both in Russia and on tour.

In the 2015-16 season Sinaisky will conduct the St. Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra, Dresden Philharmonic, SWR Radio-Sinfonieorchester Stuttgart, a production of Prokofiev's *The Fiery Angel* with Komische Oper Berlin, Tchaikovsky's *The Queen of Spades* with Hungarian State Opera, and orchestral performances with the Lahti Symphony Orchestra, Stavanger Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, BBC Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Seattle Symphony.

Sinaisky holds the positions of Conductor Emeritus of the BBC Philharmonic and Honorary Conductor of the Malmö Symphony Orchestra. Memorable projects with the BBC Philharmonic have included the "Shostakovich and His Heroes" festival, tours to Europe and China, and many appearances at the BBC Proms. With the Malmö Symphony, Sinaisky has toured to the U.K. and to Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, and recorded an acclaimed four-disc series of the symphonies of Franz Schmidt.

INGRID FLITER

BRUCE ANDERSON MEMORIAL FUND GUEST ARTIST

Argentine pianist Ingrid Fliter has won the admiration and hearts of audiences around the world. Winner of the 2006 Gilmore Artist Award, one of only a handful of pianists and the only woman to have received this honor, Fliter divides her time between North America and Europe.

Fliter made her American orchestral debut with the Atlanta Symphony, just days after the announcement of her Gilmore award. Fliter's recent and upcoming performance highlights include her debut with the New World Symphony and re-engagements with the San Francisco, Detroit, Cincinnati, Atlanta, and Seattle symphonies, as well as with the National Arts Centre Orchestra in Ottawa; appearances with London's Philharmonia and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras; all-Chopin recitals in London, Stockholm, Lisbon, and at the Casals Festival in Puerto Rico; and her fourth tour to Australia. In the summer of 2015 she was the featured soloist on the Youth Orchestra of the Americas Canadian tour.

Born in Buenos Aires in 1973, Fliter began her piano studies in Argentina with Elizabeth Westerkamp. In 1992 she moved to Europe where she continued her studies in Freiburg with Vitaly Margulis, in Rome with Carlos Bruno, and with Franco Scala and Boris Petrushansky at the Academy "Incontri col Maestro" in Imola, Italy. Fliter began playing public recitals at the age of 11 and made her professional orchestra debut at the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires at the age of 16. Already the winner of several Argentine competitions, she went on to win prizes at the Cantu International Competition and the Ferruccio Busoni Competition in Italy, and in 2000 was awarded the silver medal at the Frederic Chopin Competition in Warsaw. She was recently invited to teach at the Imola International Academy "Incontri col Maestro," beginning in the fall of 2015.



Ingrid Fliter most recently performed with the St. Louis Symphony in January 2010.

HOOKS

If you love the music you hear in this concert, you'll want to come back for more later in the season.

PROKOFIEV ROMEO AND JULIET: March 5-6

Gilbert Varga, conductor; Denis Kozhukhin, piano

TCHAIKOVSKY *Hamlet*

SHOSTAKOVICH Piano Concerto No. 2

PROKOFIEV Selections from *Romeo and Juliet*

As part of the Shakespeare Festival, Prokofiev's other ballet is featured, as well as Tchaikovsky's take on the melancholy Dane, and a piano concerto by Shostakovich, a sort of Hamlet character himself: What was he really thinking? Was he mad? Was he the sanest one in the room?

TO BE HUMAN:

LISA CHONG, SECOND VIOLIN

"For me, this season's absolute highlight is Mahler 5 [January 22-23]. I've loved this since high school, and playing it live ... I can just barely keep it together, it's so exciting. The opening is indescribably powerful. To be moved by this is simply to be human. And Robertson's rendition is sure to be riveting and personal."



Lisa Chong

YOU TAKE IT FROM HERE

If these concerts have inspired you to learn more, here are suggested source materials with which to continue your explorations.



Judy Davis as George Sand in
Impromptu

Simon Morrison, *Lina and Serge: The Love and Wars of Lina Prokofiev*

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt

As tragic a story of star-cross'd lovers as you can find.

James Lapine, director, *Impromptu*
DVD

It's a movie, not history, but you are treated to a superb performance by Judy Davis as George Sand, with Hugh Grant as Chopin.

Alex Ross, "The Art of Fear: Music in Stalin's Russia" in *The Rest Is Noise: Listening to the Twentieth Century*

Farrar Straus Giroux

One of the most compelling chapters of Ross's exemplary survey of the 20th-century as lived through music.

Read the program notes online, listen to podcasts, and watch the St. Louis Symphony musicians talk about the music. Go to stlsymphony.org. Click "Connect."

Keep up with the backstage life of the St. Louis Symphony, as chronicled by Symphony staffer Eddie Silva, via stlsymphony.org/blog.

The St. Louis Symphony is on



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Therese D. Pritchard,
Chair of the Firm

What are Bryan Cave's philanthropic ideals and priorities?

Community stewardship is an essential component of the culture at Bryan Cave. At the heart of everything we do is a set of core values that defines who we are and pushes us to become a better version of ourselves. One of those core values challenges us to make a difference in our communities and society. At Bryan Cave, we believe that support of our communities is not just a rewarding personal experience, but a professional responsibility.

Bryan Cave has been a supporter of the STL Symphony for the last several years. Why does Bryan Cave believe in supporting the orchestra?

Bryan Cave has been a dynamic contributor to the St. Louis community for more than 140 years. As the second-oldest orchestra in the nation, the St. Louis Symphony shares in a long history of community investment. The St. Louis community has provided Bryan Cave with a significant amount of support through the years and in return, the firm strives to give back through a variety of civic involvements including our enthusiastic support of the St. Louis Symphony.

What are Bryan Cave's hopes and dreams for the future of the STL Symphony?

Throughout our long history, Bryan Cave has established substantial and enduring relationships within the St. Louis community. We encourage our employees to contribute in ways that reflect our commitment to the community and to each other. We encourage everyone to build on our tradition of civic involvement. Bryan Cave is proud to support the St. Louis Symphony and it is our hope the symphony will continue to enrich our lives and our community for many years to come.

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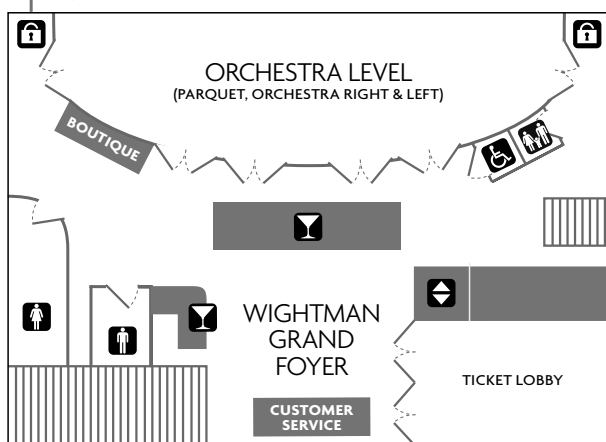
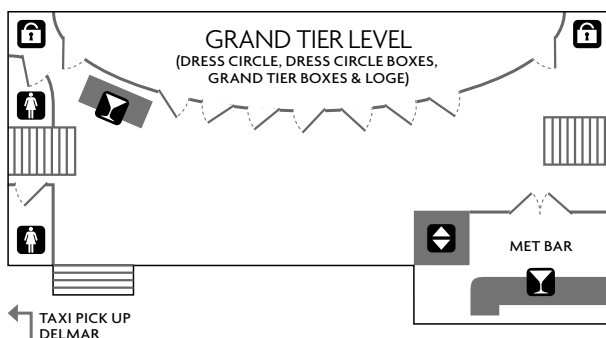
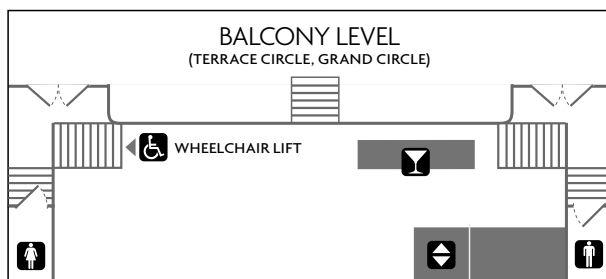
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