



Symphony847



8
7:30 PM

FOLKTALES

GORTON COMMUNITY CENTER



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Mobile Program Book

2021-2022 SEASON

Program

Christopher Ramaekers, Music Director

Tchaikovsky, Symphony No. 2 in c minor

I. Andante Sostenuto - Allegro vivo

II. Andantino marziale, quasi moderato

III. Scherzo: Allegro molto vivace

IV. Finale: Moderato assai - Allegro vivo

-- intermission --

McIntire, "Industrial Cityscape"

Stravinsky, "*The Firebird Suite* (1919)"



Musicians

Christopher Ramaekers, Music Director

First Violin

Lisa Gauslow,
Concertmaster
Pam Lutter
Lisabeth McQuaid
Lena Gaetz
Jesse Gomez
Venus Fu

Second Violin

Lisa Shaw, Principal
Dana Zapata
Annarita Tanzi
Jason Magsalin
Kari Reid
Martin Hill

Viola

Tom Bowling, Principal
Oana Tatu
Elizabeth Shepherd
Brandy Crawford

Cello

Lorraine Wallace, Principal
Richard Yeo
Isidora Nojkovic
Roberto Carillo

Bass

Elijah Medina, Principal

Flute/Piccolo

Lauren Moldenhauer, Principal
Kaitlin Sibre
Octavian Moldovean, Piccolo

Oboe

Heidi Brann, Principal
Alice Park

Clarinet

Alyssa Kenney, Principal
Philip Roth

Bassoon

Galina Kiep, Principal
LoriLee Bielski

French Horn

Matthew Oliphant, Principal
Charlie Payette
Thomas Vienna
Pete Rodriguez

Trumpet

Steven Ehrhardt, Principal
Bryant Millet

Trombone

Collin Marusek, Principal
Peter Deal
Emmy Rozanski

Tuba

Keith Polito, Principal

Timpani

Sarah Christianson

Percussion

Josh Williamson,
Principal
Justin Peters
James Gibson

Harp

Janelle Lake

Piano

Jessi Kolberg

Librarian & Personnel Manager

Brandy Crawford

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Program Notes

Tchaikovsky composed his Symphony No. 2 in 1872, mostly during the summer months while vacationing at his sister's estate in Kamianka, Ukraine. It was premiered in February, 1873 and was successful from the very beginning. This piece does not depict the brooding, agitated, moody Tchaikovsky that we have come to know from the fourth, fifth, and sixth symphonies. This work is youthful, energetic, and optimistic, while still showing small glimpses of the Tchaikovsky that was to reveal himself in later works.

Much of the character of this piece comes from Tchaikovsky's choice of musical material. Almost all of the main thematic material comes from Ukrainian folk songs, which is why the piece was later given the nickname "The Little Russian," a Russian nickname for Ukraine. The first movement theme introduced by solo French horn is a variant on the Ukrainian folksong "Down by Mother Volga." The second theme in this same movement is a faster version of the chant-like melody that Rimsky-Korsakov used in his famous overture, "The Russian Easter."

The symphony is unusual in that it doesn't have a genuine slow movement. The second movement is a march, originally intended as the bridal march from his unpublished opera *Undine*. The third movement is, as expected, a scherzo. While it does not directly quote

any actual folk melodies, the movement is very folk-like. The use of contrasting duple and triplet rhythmic patterns, and the Allegro molto vivace tempo propel the scherzo forward with a jumping, folkdance-like character.

The symphony ends with another famous folk song, this one entitled "The Crane." This melody comes back multiple times throughout the movement in different variations and played by different members of the orchestra. The climax comes at the very end when, following a series of fast repetitive patterns, the entire orchestra plays the melody fortissimo.

Despite the initial success of the symphony, Tchaikovsky revised it in 1880. After becoming more attracted to the light and graceful qualities found in 18th-century classical music and his

increasing fascination with French music, Tchaikovsky found the proportion and gestures in the symphony to be too big and overdone. The revised version that is normally performed today is slightly pared down and more modest.

This pared down, modest version is likely what drew Igor Stravinsky to the piece, who loved Tchaikovsky's music since childhood. Probably the most significant event in Stravinsky's childhood occurred during one of his father's performances of *Ruslan and Lyudmila* by Glinka, when the boy glimpsed the melancholy figure of Tchaikovsky. Stravinsky would later say that "Tchaikovsky's memory strengthened my desire to become a composer." Indeed, later in life Tchaikovsky's *Symphony No. 2* would become one of the works that he most

often conducted (excluding, of course, his own).

Stravinsky's first appearance on the podium occurred in 1914 conducting his suite from *The Firebird*. The similarities between the two works are notable. The dry, angular rhythms, and short repeated motivic patterns throughout Tchaikovsky's first movement mirror the angular energy of the Infernal Dance. The folk-like scherzo dances in triple time, similarly to the *Firebird Variations*, and the grandiose finale of the fourth movement compliments the sunrise in the finale of *The Firebird*.

The story of *The Firebird* centers on the journey of Prince Ivan. Ivan enters the magical realm of Kastcheï the Immortal. While wandering in the gardens, Ivan sees, chases, and eventually catches the Firebird. The Firebird begs Ivan for his

life and agrees to assist Ivan in exchange for his eventual freedom.

Ivan then sees 13 princesses and falls in love with one of them. He decides to confront Kastcheï the next day to ask permission to marry the princess. The two talk and eventually begin to argue and fight. When Kastcheï sends his magical creatures after Ivan, the Firebird stays true to his promise and helps him, casting a spell on the creatures and making them dance an elaborate, energetic dance - the "Infernal Dance," around which the suite is built.

The creatures and Kastcheï fall asleep to the Berceuse (Lullaby). Kastcheï awakens but is put under another spell and begins to dance. While Kastcheï is dancing, the Firebird tells Ivan that the secret to Kastcheï's immortality lies in a

large, magical egg. Ivan destroys the egg, killing Kastchei and all of the magical beings of the palace disappear. The mortals, including the princesses, awaken to celebrate their victory.

The combination of dry rhythms with warm melodies feature prominently in *Industrial Cityscape* by Shawn McIntire. Written in 2019, the composer notes that "Industrial Cityscape was inspired by the contrast and juxtaposition of nature and urbanism. Elements of the piece are meant to represent the sunrise, the honking of car horns, the bustling nature of cities, and the beauty in both."

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