

The 992nd Suntory Subscription Concert
Fri. Nov. 10, 2023, 19:00 at Suntory Hall

The 993rd Orchard Hall Subscription Concert
Sun. Nov. 12, 2023, 15:00 at Bunkamura Orchard Hall

The 158th Tokyo Opera City Subscription Concert
Thu. Nov. 16, 2023, 19:00 at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall

Andrea Battistoni, conductor

Haruma Sato, cello*

Akihiro Miura, concertmaster

<The 130th anniversary of Tchaikovsky's death>

Tchaikovsky:

The Tempest, Fantasia after Shakespeare's Drama, Op. 18 (ca. 21 min)

Tchaikovsky:

Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33* (ca. 20 min)

Introduction: Moderato quasi andante

Theme: Moderato semplice

Variation 1: Tempo del tema

Variation 2: Tempo del tema

Variation 3: Andante

Variation 4: Allegro vivo

Variation 5: Andante grazioso

Variation 6: Allegro moderato

Variation 7: Andante sostenuto

Variation 8 & Coda:

Allegro moderato con anima

— intermission (ca. 15 min) —

Tchaikovsky:

Hamlet, Overture-fantasia after Shakespeare, Op. 67 (ca. 20 min)

Tchaikovsky:

Romeo and Juliet, Overture-fantasia after Shakespeare (ca. 20 min)

Presented by Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra

Co-presented by Tokyo Opera City Cultural Foundation (Nov. 16)

Subsidized by the Agency for Cultural Affairs Government of Japan |

Japan Arts Council (Nov. 10)

Endorsed by the Shakespeare Society of Japan

In Association with **Bunkamura** (Nov. 12)



- ♪ All seats are reserved. Late admittance will be refused during the live performance. If you enter or reenter just before the concert or between movements, we may escort you to a seat different from the one to which you were originally assigned.
- ♪ Exiting during the performance will be tolerated. If you do not feel well, please exit or enter as you need. However, please mind the other listeners so that they will be minimally disturbed.
- ♪ Please refrain from using your cellphone or other electronic devices during performance.
- ♪ Hold applause please. Please cherish the "afterglow" at the end of each piece for a moment before your applause.

Artists Profile



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Andrea Battistoni, conductor

Chief Conductor of
the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra

Born in Verona in 1987, Andrea Battistoni is a rising star with an international reputation as one of the most important conductors of his generation. He was appointed First Guest Conductor at the Teatro Carlo Felice in Genoa in 2013, and Chief Conductor of the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra in 2016.

In Tokyo he has proved to be a sensation with his charisma and sensitive musicality, conducting Tokyo Phil in operas such as *Nabucco*, *Rigoletto*, *Madama Butterfly* (Nikikai), and *Aida* (co-produced grand opera), as well as numerous symphonic works including *Roman Trilogy*, *Pictures at an Exhibition*, and *Rite of Spring*. The concert-style operas he has led - *Turandot* (2015), *Iris* (2016), and *Mefistofele* (2018) have secured his reputation as a leading light with critics and audiences alike. He has been regularly releasing CDs with the Tokyo Phil through Nippon Columbia.

Other noteworthy engagements include: Teatro alla Scala, La Fenice in Venice, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Arena di Verona, Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich, Mariinsky Theater, and world-renowned orchestras such as the Filarmonica della Scala, Accademia di Santa Cecilia, and Israel Philharmonic.

His book, *Non e musica per vecchi* was published by Rizzoli 2012, and by Ongaku-No-Tomo-Sha in Japan in 2017.

In 2021, Andrea Battistoni, performing with Tokyo Phil, won the OPUS KLASSIK Prize 2021 in the 20th/21st Century symphonic category, one of the most prestigious classical awards in Europe, for their international disc, "Dvorak: Symphony No. 9, 'From the New World' & Works of Akira Ifukube."

Website <http://www.andreabattistoni.it/>

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Andrea-Battistoni-159320417463885/>

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Haruma Sato, cello

Born in Nagoya, Japan, in 1998.

In 2019, he became the first Japanese to win the first prize (violoncello) at the ARD International Music Competition Munich, and in 2018, he won the first prize and a special prize at the Witold Lutosławski International Cello Competition. He has received numerous awards, including the first prize in the cello division of the 83rd Music Competition of Japan.

He has performed with Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra and other major orchestras in Japan and abroad, and has received favorable reviews for his recitals and chamber music. In 2018, he appeared at the “Chopin and His Europe” International Music Festival in Warsaw. In November 2020, his debut album “The Senses” was released from Deutsche Grammophon.

In 2023, he released his third CD “Mendelssohn Works ~ Auf Flügeln des Gesanges”.

He studied under Ryoichi Hayashi, Nobuko Yamazaki, and Kenji Nakagi.

He received the 18th Hideo Saito Music Award, the 30th Idemitsu Music Award and the 32th Nippon Steel Music Award.

He is currently studying under J. P. Maintz at the Berlin University of the Arts. He is playing a 1903 Enrico Rocca cello generously loaned by the Munetsugu Collection.

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Program Notes

Text by Robert Markow

Tchaikovsky:

The Tempest,

Fantasia after Shakespeare's Drama, Op. 18

Tchaikovsky turned three times to Shakespeare for inspiration for a symphonic poem. First came *Romeo and Juliet* in 1870. Following its success, Tchaikovsky next turned to Shakespeare's final play, *The Tempest*, in 1873; third was *Hamlet* in 1888. All three form part of this TPO program.

The Tempest is generally regarded as one of Tchaikovsky's finest orchestral scores. This was a pivotal work in his life, as it was the music that piqued the interest of Nadezhda von Meck, the wealthy widow who was to become the composer's benefactor and unseen correspondent for twelve years. In 1875, he wrote to her that when he wrote *The Tempest*, he "was in a kind of exalted, blissful frame of mind, wandering during the day alone in the woods, towards evening over the immeasurable steppes, and sitting at night by the open window listening to the solemn silence of this out-of-the-way place [Usovo – a village near Kiev] – a silence broken occasionally by some indistinguishable sound of the night. During those two weeks I wrote *The Tempest* in rough without any effort, as though moved by some supernatural force" – a sentiment that accords perfectly with the magical setting of Shakespeare's play.

The opening is wonderfully evocative, though of what exactly is each listener's privilege to determine (a vast seascape covered by low, gray clouds, perhaps?). The sprite Ariel (fluttery, feather-lite woodwinds) and the magician Prospero (a majestic, hymn-like subject) conjure up a storm of fearful proportions. Ferdinand is shipwrecked on Prospero's enchanted island, where he falls in love with the magician's daughter Miranda. Naturally, Tchaikovsky gives us a love theme of bewitching beauty to accompany their feelings for each other. The grotesque creature Caliban

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too is given appropriate music. After assorted other events, Prospero renounces his magical powers and delivers an epilogue in which he asks the audience for forgiveness and liberation by applauding. The last sounds go to the gently undulating, ever-present, everlasting sea in all its mystery.

PIOTR ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY

Born in Votkinsk, May 7, 1840; died in St. Petersburg, November 6, 1893

Work composed: 1873 World premiere: December 19, 1873 in Moscow, conducted by Nikolai Rubinshtein

Instrumentation: piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals), strings

Tchaikovsky:

Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33

The *Variations on a Rococo Theme* grew out of the admiration Tchaikovsky held for music of the mid-to-late eighteenth century, especially that of his favorite composer, Mozart. The term “rococo” refers to a style common in mid-eighteenth-century Europe characterized by delicacy, grace, charm, and elegance, hence, expressive of a spirit of artificiality and lighthearted sentimentality. Anything particularly dramatic or impassioned would have been out of place and regarded in poor taste. Tchaikovsky’s homage to a bygone era was written in 1876, more than a century removed from the period it nostalgically evokes. The first performance was given in Moscow on November 30, 1877 with soloist Wilhelm Fitzenhagen and Nikolai Rubinstein conducting.

Cellist Haruma Sato performs the *Rococo Variations* as Tchaikovsky wrote them, but this is *not* what most cellists play and audiences hear today. Before the score was published, Fitzenhagen took it upon himself to drastically rewrite it, omitting one of the variations, restructuring the order (only the first two variations remain the same), making cuts, inserting new transitional material, and rewriting the solo part in places to conform to his personal taste. When Tchaikovsky got wind of this he

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was furious, yet allowed the score to be published with all Fitzenhagen's butchery. Tchaikovsky's original was not published until 1956, and performance material waited until the final years of the twentieth century to see light. For listeners familiar only with Fitzenhagen's version (and that's most of us), the order of the variations correspond as follows to Tchaikovsky's original: 1-2-6-7-4-5-3-Coda. Readers interested in a fuller account of this story are referred to Michael Steinberg's collection of program notes, *The Concerto: A Listener's Guide* (1998), and for an exhaustive account to Sergei Istomin's online site.

Work composed: 1876-77 World premiere: November 30, 1877 in Moscow, conducted by Nikolai Rubinshtein, with Wilhelm Fitzenhagen as the soloist.
Instrumentation: 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, strings, solo cello

Tchaikovsky:

Hamlet,

Overture-fantasia after Shakespeare, Op. 67

Tchaikovsky turned twice to the subject of Hamlet: first as the symphonic poem on this program, and again as incidental music for an 1891 production by Lucien Guitry in St. Petersburg, though the latter consisted mostly of adaptations of earlier works, including the symphonic poem, hurriedly cobbled together. As early as 1876 he had already broached the subject of setting *Hamlet* to music in a letter to his brother Modeste. He even drew up a formal outline for such a work. Twelve years later, he eventually wrote his Overture-fantasia, which was premiered in St. Petersburg on November 24, 1888 with the composer conducting. The Fifth Symphony, written concurrently, was performed on the same program, in a repeat performance from its premiere a week before.

It is hardly surprising to find Tchaikovsky attracted to a subject such as Hamlet. The composer had already evinced his interest in setting to music literary works and themes. In addition, there were manifold similarities of personality profile (uncertainty, morbid brooding, depression) between the Russian composer and the Shakespeare's Danish

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prince. Tchaikovsky left no program for his *Hamlet*, so specific events and scenes must be inferred from the music. Actually, the work makes no effort to trace any kind of dramatic program. Rather, it presents and develops emotional and psychological states to which a few pictorial touches have been added.

The slow introduction might be interpreted as Hamlet's characteristic brooding melancholy. This builds to a turbulent climax. Muted horns sound the midnight hour, whereupon the ponderous theme in the low brass and basses may conjure up the image of the ghost of Hamlet's father. Then begins the *Allegro vivace*, the main section in which two themes of starkly contrasting character are found – the first, wildly agitated, presented by both violin sections in unison; the second a tender idea given to the solo oboe. This latter is usually associated with Ophelia. A further theme of haunting poignancy is presented in the woodwinds, richly colored by the inclusion of the English horn. Tchaikovsky then exploits this wealth of ideas as he carries the tragedy irresistibly forward to its final climax, which is marked *ffff* in the score. Along the way are two brief intrusions of military music, which signal the two arrivals of Fortinbras at Elsinore. Tchaikovsky's *Hamlet*, like Shakespeare's, closes with a grim funeral march for the dead prince.

Work composed: 1888 World premiere: November 24, 1888 in Saint Petersburg, conducted by the composer

Instrumentation: piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 cornets, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (side drum, bass drum, cymbals, tam-tam), strings

Tchaikovsky: *Romeo and Juliet*, Overture-fantasia after Shakespeare

None of Shakespeare's tragedies has inspired more musical compositions than *Romeo and Juliet*. The subject – love – has something to do with it, of course, but love is treated in numerous other works as well. What makes *Romeo and Juliet* so compelling is the heartbreak of

the family feud that acts as a kind of fate hovering over the two young lovers, something beyond the control of the hapless victims. In his music, Tchaikovsky infuses this story with the elemental emotions, soaring passions and poetic impulses that make Shakespeare's play so gripping in its expressive power. Although the word "overture" appears in the title, it is really a symphonic poem in all but name, a self-contained orchestral work in one movement inspired by an extra-musical stimulus.

This is one of the composer's earliest orchestral scores. The suggestion for it came from Mily Balakirev, a prominent composer himself and mentor of many late nineteenth-century Russian composers. Balakirev guided the young Tchaikovsky through the composition of *Romeo and Juliet*; some advice he took, other he rejected, and the work went through several revisions between its premiere in 1870 and its final form of 1886.

Tchaikovsky makes no attempt to follow the story line, yet succeeds admirably in capturing the essential tone and substance of the play in a satisfying musical argument. Three main subjects are presented and interwoven: the solemn, ecclesiastical music representing Friar Laurence (the opening passage); the furious strife music of the feuding families of Montagues and Capulets, with its irregular accentuation and stabbing effects; and the soaring, lushly romantic love theme. The coda consists of the love music transformed into a lament, as if accompanying a funeral procession.

Work composed: 1869 (1st Version), 1870 (2nd Version), 1880 (3rd Version)

World premiere: March 16, 1870 in Moscow, conducted by Nikolai Rubinshtein (1st Version) / February 17, 1872 in Saint Petersburg, conducted by Eduard Nápravnik (2nd Version) / May 1, 1886 in Tbilisi, conducted by Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov (3rd Version)

Instrumentation: piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (bass drum, cymbals), harp, strings

Formerly a horn player in the Montreal Symphony, **Robert Markow** now writes program notes for numerous orchestras and other musical organizations in North America and Asia. He taught at Montreal's McGill University for many years, has led music tours to several countries, and writes for numerous leading classical music journals.

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