

The 1014th Suntory Subscription Concert
Thu. Apr. 24, 2025, 19:00 at Suntory Hall

The 169th Tokyo Opera City Subscription Concert
Fri. Apr. 25, 2025, 19:00 at Tokyo Opera City Concert Hall

The 1015th Orchard Hall Subscription Concert
Sun. Apr. 27, 2025, 15:00 at Bunkamura Orchard Hall

Tadaaki Otaka, conductor

Izumi Tateno, piano*

Akihiro Miura, concertmaster

Atsutada Otaka:

Excerpts from "Traveling Muse" for Orchestra (ca. 10 min)

1. Small Choral
5. The Princess of the Sicily
15. Finale -To the Land of the Blue Bird-

Ravel:

Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in D major* (ca. 20 min)

<The 150 anniversary of Maurice Ravel's birth>

— intermission (ca. 15 min) —

Elgar:

Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 88

(Elaborated by Anthony Payne) (ca. 60 min)

- I. Allegro molto maestoso
- II. Scherzo: Allegretto
- III. Adagio solenne
- IV. Allegro

Presented by the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra

Co-presented by Tokyo Opera City Cultural Foundation (Apr. 25)

Subsidized by the Agency for Cultural Affairs Government of Japan |

Japan Arts Council

In Association with **Bunkamura** (Apr. 27)



- ♪ 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.

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Artists Profile

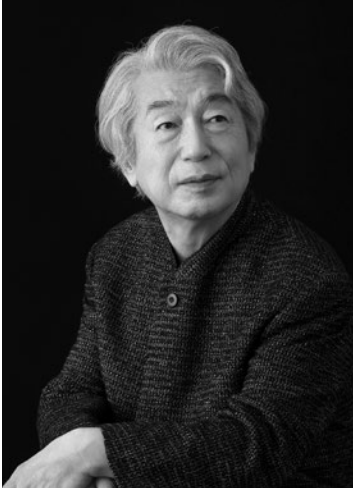


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Tadaaki Otaka,
conductor

Conductor Laureate of
the Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra

Born in 1947, OTAKA studied at Toho Gakuen School of Music under Hideo SAITO, a professor known for teaching Seiji Ozawa and Hiroshi Wakasugi. He then moved to Vienna to study with Hans Swarowsky and Spannagel. As Japan's leading conductor, OTAKA conducted all major Japanese Orchestras. He is also a popular figure throughout the world particularly in the UK, where he is invited as Guest Conductor to the London Symphony, London Philharmonic, BBC Symphony etc. He made his Proms debut with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales in 1988. He also received invitations to the Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Bamberg Philharmonic and many others. In 1993, the Welsh College of Music and Drama conferred an Honorary Fellowship on OTAKA. He also holds an Honorary Doctorate from the University of Wales. In 1997, he was awarded the CBE, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to British musical life. He is also the first Japanese to receive the Elgar Medal in 1999, for his continuous efforts at spreading the works by Elgar outside the UK. Member of the Japan Art Academy.



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Izumi Tateno, piano

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A legend in the classical music world, the 88-year-old pianist has established an unshakable position by expanding the possibilities of the art of performance with a fresh perspective that defies boundaries and disciplines.

Although he suffered a cerebral hemorrhage in 2002 that left him paralyzed on the right side of his body, he accepted his fate and resumed his activities as a “pianist of the left hand. His passion for music has led him to explore music even more, and he has carved out a unique genre of his own. Izumi Tateno's left hand” has been dedicated to more than 100 pieces by composers from 10 different countries. In 2020, Izumi Tateno celebrated the 60th anniversary of her performing career with a commemorative recital tour throughout Japan, which was a great success.

In 2023, he celebrated his 80th birthday with concerts in Tokyo, Osaka, Sapporo, Fukuoka, and other cities throughout Japan.

In 2025, he plans to hold a concert to celebrate his 90th birthday. The style of a “true maestro” who has reached a state beyond the physical body and no longer needs to be referred to as “left-handed,” is the greatest appeal of his unwavering conviction and earnestness.

Program Notes

Text by Robert Markow

Atsutada Otaka: Excerpts from "Traveling Muse" for Orchestra

Until his death four years ago, Atsutada Otaka enjoyed the position of being one of Japan's most highly acclaimed living composers. He came from a family of musicians – his mother was a pianist, his father Hisatada too was a composer, and his brother Tadaaki is one of Japan's busiest conductors. Otaka studied first at Tokyo University of the Arts (Geidai), where he learned composition from Akio Yashiro, Tomojiro Ikenouchi, and Akira Miyoshi, and piano from Kazuko Yasukawa. In 1966 the French government granted him a scholarship to continue his training in Paris at the Conservatoire national supérieur de musique. There he studied with Maurice Duruflé, Marcel Bitsch, Jean-Claude Henri, and Henri Dutilleux. After returning to Japan he became a professor at Geidai, where he taught until 2011. His students there included Junichi Hirokami. The TPO premiered Otaka's *Image* in 1981 with the composer's younger brother Tadaaki conducting, and recorded the work as well.

Atsutada twice won the Otaka Prize in honor of his father, who, in 1941, became conductor of the orchestra that would eventually morph into the NHK Symphony Orchestra. The Orchestra annually awards the Otaka Prize for a Japanese orchestral work. In Atsutada's case, these prizes went to his *Image* in 1981 and *Beyond Time* in 2011.

Otaka composed *Traveling Muse* in 2004 as a collection of 14 short pieces for Piano Four-Hands. They were conceived for young fingers, and are fairly easy to play. In 2020, a year before his death, Otaka orchestrated the pieces, adding one more for a total of 15, of which we hear three at this concert. The composer explained that the first is a sort of child's introduction to polyphonic writing (two or more melodic lines played simultaneously). The fifth is an image of a fairy tale princess – young, pretty, noble, but despite her wealth and beauty, seems a bit lonely. The final number evokes the end of a long journey to many lands and anticipation of arriving in “the

land where beautiful bluebird lives”

ATSUTADA OTAKA: Born in Tokyo, March 10, 1944; died in Tokyo, February 16, 2021

Work composed: 2003-04[piano four hands], 2020[orchestra]

World premiere (excerpt): May 15, 2022 at Miyazaki Prefectural Arts Theater, by Miyazaki International Music Festival Orchestra conducted by Junichi Hirokami

Instrumentation: 2 flutes (2nd doubling on piccolo), 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons (2nd doubling on contrabassoon), 4 horns, 2 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (snare drum, tenor drum, bass drum, cymbals, suspended cymbal, tam-tam, wood block, tubular bells, xylophone, glockenspiel), harp, piano (celesta), strings

Ravel: Piano Concerto for the Left Hand in D major

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In 1929, Ravel was approached by Paul Wittgenstein (brother of the famous philosopher Ludwig) to write a concerto. Wittgenstein was an Austrian pianist who had lost his right arm at the Russian front in World War I. “In this kind of work,” said Ravel, “it is essential to create the effect not of a light, delicate fabric, but of a work written for both hands. ... The listener must never have the feeling that more could have been achieved with two hands.” In this regard, Ravel succeeded admirably. Through the use of the pedal, suspensions, rolled chords, wide-ranging arpeggios, and cleverly arranged combinations of lyrical melody and accompanying figuration, Ravel fashioned a complete and uncompromising work that makes no apparent concessions to the soloist’s physical limitations. Jazz elements, which the composer had absorbed during his visit to America in 1927-1928, and masterly orchestration are among the features of this work, premiered in Vienna on January 5, 1932 with Robert Heger conducting the Vienna Symphony.

The concerto is in three main parts, all connected. It begins in the lowest range and darkest colors of the orchestra. The piano enters with a long cadenza of stunning virtuosity, sounding every bit like it was written for two hands. The

orchestra then develops the main theme with richly-textured accompaniment from the soloist. Without warning, the jazzy central section arrives in the form of a scherzo. Two ideas are worked out here: the first is a rapidly-descending series of seven parallel triads; a bit later, in the piano, comes the rollicking, dance-like tune that reminds some listeners of a jig. Following a second cadenza, brief reminiscences of previous material bring the concerto to a brilliant conclusion.

MAURICE RAVEL: Born in Ciboure, Pyrénées-Atlantiques, France, March 7, 1875; died in Paris, December 28, 1937

Work composed: 1929-30 **World premiere:** January 5, 1932 in Vienna

Instrumentation: 3 flutes (3rd doubling on piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, clarinet in Eb, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (snare drum, bass drum, triangle, cymbals, tam-tam wood block.), harp, strings, solo piano

Elgar: Symphony No. 3 in C minor, Op. 88 (Elaborated by Anthony Payne)

Like Schubert's *Unfinished* and Mahler's Tenth, Elgar's Third Symphony lay incomplete at the time of its composer's death. When the news broke that Anthony Payne (1936-2021), a prominent British composer, writer, and broadcaster, was in the process of finishing the sketches for the Third Symphony, Elgar fans were, depending on their orientation, either up in arms over what they perceived as a sacrilege, or ecstatic that the Elgar catalogue was being expanded by a very substantial opus (the symphony lasts nearly an hour). But so successful was Payne's "elaboration" that virtually everyone was won over, press and public alike, at the world premiere by the BBC Symphony Orchestra in London, conducted by Andrew Davis on February 15, 1998. In the quarter century since then, numerous other orchestras have seized the opportunity of presenting to their audiences this major "new" work.

Elgar wrote his First Symphony in 1908, his Second three years later. He did not turn to the genre again until the early 1930s. His friend, the critic

George Bernard Shaw, encouraged him to write another symphony, but Elgar balked. When Shaw got the BBC to commission the work in December of 1932, Elgar finally committed himself and began work in earnest. Less than a year later, he was diagnosed with cancer, and died a few months later. At his death, the Third Symphony had gotten no further than about 140 pages of sketches and drafts, and much of the material was left in an incomprehensible jumble.

Anthony Payne tells the story of his involvement with the score:

“I knew that on his deathbed Elgar had placed an embargo on attempts to complete the work, on what he called ‘tinkering’ with it; but I felt this could not prevent me from musing over the sketches in the privacy of my room. ... [In 1993] Paul Hindmarsh of BBC Manchester telephoned to ask whether I would be interested in putting the sketches into some sort of shape for workshop performance. I jumped at the idea.”

“However, the Elgar family, who controlled the copyright to the sketches, came to the decision that they could not allow work to continue on the project. I sympathized with their stance, but was, of course, deeply disappointed. [Then] the family said that they had no objection to the idea of a radio program about the sketches. Accordingly, I went ahead and recorded a talk for the BBC in March 1995.”

The Elgar family eventually realized that the sketches would come out of copyright anyway in 2005, allowing anyone to have a go at them, and decided in 1995 to commission from Payne, someone they could trust, a complete version of the symphony.

The symphony opens with an urgent, aspiring theme, richly scored in the Elgarian manner and announcing a work on a grand scale. The first theme group continues with one of Elgar’s most ravishing melodies, breathed out softly and sweetly in the violins. This is followed by a glorious effusion from the full orchestra *fortissimo*, a sumptuous and noble passage as only Elgar could write. The second subject consists of a restless, fragmented idea in faster tempo that sounds curiously like music from Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel*.

The *Allegretto* is much lighter in texture, and radiates an air of elfin magic and mystery. It might well have served as an interlude in incidental music for *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, had Elgar written such a score (one wonders

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why not). Actually, the gently tripping initial idea comes from incidental music Elgar wrote in 1923 for Binyon's drama *King Arthur*.

The slow movement, marked *Adagio solenne*, unfolds with a world-weariness and gravity befitting Wagner's *Parsifal*. A plethora of harmonic suspensions, tortured chromaticism, somber colors and deep introspection are hallmarks of this movement. The effect, Elgar wrote, is "to open some vast, bronze doors into something strangely unfamiliar."

The finale presented Payne with his greatest challenge, for Elgar had given no clues as to how his Symphony was supposed to end. Sweeping themes, bold brass writing, fanfares and marches will sound familiar to all Elgarians, but the ending is by Payne, who calculated that it "would lead the music away into some new visionary world." Payne hence opted for an ending not of pomp and majesty, but of hushed reverence and quiet mystery.

EDWARD ELGAR: Born in Broadheath (near Worcester), England, June 2, 1857; died in Worcester, February 23, 1934

Work composed: 1932-33 (Unfinished: Anthony Payne elaborated it mainly 1993-1997) **World premiere:** February 15, 1998 at the Royal Festival Hall in London, by the BBC Symphony Orchestra conducted by Andrew Davis

Instrumentation: 3 flutes (3rd doubling on piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (tambourine, snare drum, bass drum, triangle, cymbals, tam-tam), 2 harps, 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.