

**MONDAY  
EVENING  
CONCERTS**

**ALEXEI LUBIMOV:  
HOMMAGE À MARIA YUDINA**

February 29, 2016 | 8:00 PM  
Zipper Hall at the Colburn School

## MONDAY EVENING CONCERTS FEBRUARY 29, 2016

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Franz Schubert (1797-1828) – **Four Impromptus op. 90, D. 899** (1827)

- No. 1 in C minor
- No. 2 in E flat major
- No. 3 in G flat major
- No. 4 in A flat major

Valentin Silvestrov (b. 1937) – **Post Scriptum, a Sonata for Violin & Piano** (1990)

- I. Largo – Allegro
- II. Andantino
- III. Allegro vivace

Movses Pogossian, violin

*intermission*

Alexandre Rabinovitch-Barakovsky (b. 1945) – **Musique triste, parfois tragique** (1976)

C.P.E. Bach (1714-1788) – **Fantasia in C Major, Wq 59/6, H. 284** (1785)

Galina Ustvolskaya (1919-2006) – **Sonata No.6** (1988)

Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) – **Trio No. 45 in E flat Major, Hob. XV/29** (1797)

- I. Poco allegretto
- II. Andantino ed innocentemente
- III. Finale: Allemande: Presto assai

Movses Pogossian, violin  
Clive Greensmith, cello

## PROGRAM NOTES

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We struggle to pay homage, perhaps struggle to be worthy to pay homage, to those whose lives were so much more hazardous than our own. Maria Yudina (1899-1970) was, it is said, a pianist Stalin admired. That did not protect her from being thrown out of her teaching position at the Leningrad Conservatory in 1930. She had the wrong world-view (religious, Jewish), the wrong friends (Pasternak, Shostakovich), and the wrong musical interests (new works, western as well as Soviet, in addition to the classics she revered). Nor was her life any easier under Khrushchev and Brezhnev.

She went on, though, performing, recording, and teaching, keeping faith. To the young Alexei Lubimov she was a vital mentor.

Terror leaves us with saints.

### **Franz Schubert (1797-1828) – Four Impromptus, D. 899**

- No. 1 in C minor
- No. 2 in E flat major
- No. 3 in G flat major
- No. 4 in A flat major

It was Schubert's publisher, not the composer himself, who called these pieces "impromptus," a title apt enough for pieces that have escaped standard form, pieces that can define themselves, as much as a C. P. E. Bach fantasia or an Ustvolskaya sonata. Like the examples of those types on this program, the four impromptus registered as D. 899 are late works, dating from 1827 – though the lateness here, of course, is relative, that of an artist only just turning thirty. As if living three times as fast as the norm, Schubert by that age had accumulated a full span of experience – experience, perhaps most of all, of solitariness.

The figure of the lone wanderer stalks through his output, and is encountered here again in the first impromptu, which begins – after G in octaves, raising the curtain without disclosing anything about what the show will be – with a melody in the right hand, unaccompanied and in ambulatory rhythm. After a fully harmonized answering phrase, the process is repeated: naked antecedent, clothed consequent. Thus is the theme completed, to be repeated before it gives way to a more songful variant in A flat. This, too, is repeated, with flowing triplets, and followed by a return to the original version, then to the variant, now in G, with counterpoint. Finally, the first version of the theme comes back again, with a tension between minor and major modes ultimately decided in favor of the latter.

Conversely, and much more unusually, the second impromptu withdraws to a home in E flat minor after beginning in the major as a stream of triplets flowing like water. This stream careers up and down the keyboard before it is overcast by minor-mode shadows, to which it returns after a spell again in the major. There is a middle section in B minor, and then a reprise of the first music.

Simultaneously anchored and decorated by triplet arpeggiation almost throughout, the third piece is a piano song, once more in ternary form – a vision of calm, but of almost constantly troubled calm, the disquiet coming forward in the central passage.

Instability in the major mode, the sense that the walker's footing may slip at any moment, is a feature, too, of the fourth impromptu, whose sparkling arpeggios start in A flat minor and do not reach A flat major until after a lengthening of the chordal counter-subject. Left-hand melody comes to fill the music's space. After a dramatic trio section in C sharp minor, the music regains its former state.

### **Valentin Silvestrov (b. 1937) - *Post Scriptum***

- I. Largo – Allegro
- II. Andantino
- III. Allegro vivace, con moto

*Post Scriptum, Postludium, Postface, Epitaph, Elegy*: Valentin Silvestrov's large output abounds in titles that speak of the end, and even of being beyond the end – the end, that is, of a musical culture that has exhausted itself. If we try to stir that culture into life, we will hear only its last tremblings, or perhaps only the echo of its last tremblings.

This is not, needless to say, a view that Monday Evening Concerts patrons will thoroughly endorse, though it is a plausible understanding of our present time, when music that is fresh, resilient, and powerful seems so rarely attainable. It is also a position from which Silvestrov has been able to conceive so many beautiful memorials.

The first movement of this sonata, occupying more than half the work's fifteen-minute duration, wavers slowly between a poignant phrase that can never quite be completed and injections of energy. Initially, this principal phrase, speaking of loss from out of a condition of loss, belongs to the violin, but sometimes this instrument appears itself to be exhausted, leaving the piano to take over. The second movement is a violin song that again is unable to find its close – until its close finds it. Where there should be a third movement, only echoes are left, and another suspended melody.

This work is, the composer has suggested, "a postscript to Mozart and the whole Classical tradition. The text has already been written. We simply add our annotations, thoughts, questions, consternation, astonishment and regret. The Classical phonemes begin to waft through other times and spaces. There is no longer such a thing as the ability to predict what something means, and its place is taken by a mysterious symbolism."

### **Alexandre Rabinoviitch-Barakovsky (b. 1945) - *Musique triste, parfois tragique***

Fragments are being recalled, repeated, evoked, forgotten through this fifteen-minute composition from 1976 by Russia's pioneer minimalist. The wanderer is lost.

### **Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach (1714-88) - *Fantasia in C major, Wq 59/6, H. 284***

Lubimov placed one of Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach's fantasias (in F sharp minor) at the head of his classic solo album *Der Bote* – and added a piece by Silvestrov at the close. Here these two composers come together again, perhaps to convey the message of how fluency (which C. P. E. Bach certainly possessed) has left us. However, the invitation may alternatively be to point up how indecision and recursion were not unknown in 1785, to a composer who, into his seventies, had long passed the years his great father had been allotted.

The fantasia starts with a one-measure arpeggio figure that moves through different harmonies and reappears throughout the piece as instigation and memory. Early on, it is answered by cadenza-like episodes, including a dazzling wheel. Following this comes a song moving chromatically from E flat, and then another in E minor, with which the piece stays occupied some while, eventually plunging towards Wagnerian harmony. The wheel returns, but the slow music lingers, until the first figure finds its way to an assertion again of C major.

## **Galina Ustvol'skaya (1919-2006) - Piano Sonata No. 6**

There is a part for piano in almost everything Ustvol'skaya composed. She wrote a concerto for the instrument and six sonatas. But this is not the piano we are used to. Ustvol'skaya recreates it as an instrument of declamation, of force, and of extremes—extremes of loudness, of speed, of register. The result is virtuoso music, but completely unshowy. Nothing is grateful here, nothing merely fluent. All is incised meaning. Her Sixth Sonata, one of her last works, dating from 1988, is in one seven-minute movement to be played *espressivissimo* and very loud.

## **Franz Joseph Haydn (1732-1809) - Trio No. 45 in E flat Major, Hob. XV/29**

- I. Poco allegretto
- II. Andantino ed innocentamente
- III. Finale: Allemande: Presto assai

In his classic book *The Classical Style*, Charles Rosen salutes Haydn's piano trios as "along with Mozart's concertos the most brilliant piano works before Beethoven" – a claim certainly supported by this E flat major example, which was one of the last in the sequence, coming from a set of three the composer wrote in 1797 and dedicated to a pianist he had met during his visits to London, a few years before: Theresa Jansen Bartolozzi. She, born in Germany, was a pupil of Clementi and one of the foremost musicians in the capital of musical commerce. To go by this trio, she must have been an artist of nuance, dexterity, contrapuntal clarity, and humor.

Following a bold tonic chord, the first movement introduces a theme that begins with what could be the head motif of a Baroque fugue but that then turns into dotted-rhythm casualness. Repeated, the theme seems about to be treated to variations, but this unusual form also has rondo aspects. The cello almost always doubles the piano's left hand, as throughout the piece, but the violin has notable independence – not least in a variation in the minor. Towards the end of the movement, a surprising halt on a C minor chord opens the way to a harmonically exploratory passage that includes several measures of diminished-chord sparkle before the home key is rediscovered.

Perhaps with these measures still in mind, Haydn then swivels far from E flat, to B major, to open his slow movement, which initially has the character of a lullaby. Its melody is presented by the piano alone, then taken up by the violin, after which the even mood is broken, but only so that it can be resumed in sliding back to E flat.

This short movement comes to rest on a dominant chord, from which the finale sets off at a pace. It is, at last, a sonata movement, set to the metre of an allemande – not at all the kind of slow dance it was several decades before for Bach, but a racing number in triple time.

Program notes © Paul Griffiths. Paul Griffiths is an acclaimed writer on contemporary and classical music whose books include *A Concise History of Western Music* and *The Penguin Companion to Classical Music*. He is also known as a librettist (Elliott Carter's *What Next?*) and novelist. In 2002, Griffiths was honored by the French government as a Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

## **BIOGRAPHIES**

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**Alexei Lubimov** is one of the most strikingly original and outstanding pianists performing today. His large repertoire, dedication to principle and musical morals make him a notable exception in today's music scene.

Born in Moscow in 1944, early in life Lubimov established a dual passion for Baroque music performed on traditional instruments and for 20th century composers ranging from Schönberg, Stockhausen, Boulez, Ives and Ligeti, to his contemporaries Gubaidulina, Silvestrov and Pärt. Following studies at the Moscow Conservatory with Heinrich Neuhaus, he first attracted notice with his compelling performances of modern scores, and in 1968 played the Moscow debuts of works by John Cage and Terry Riley. He premiered many contemporary pieces in Russia, where Soviet authorities heavily criticized his commitment to Western music and prevented him from leaving the Soviet Union for several years. So he concentrated on working with period (original) instruments of the 16th and 17th centuries and founded the Moscow Baroque Quartet and the Moscow Chamber Academy, as well as the avant-garde music festival "Alternativa" in 1988. He continues to perform both 'old' and 'new' music on his many recordings, as well as classical and romantic repertoire of the 18th and 19th centuries.

When political restrictions were lifted during the 1980's, Lubimov soon emerged among the first rank of international pianists to perform on tours in Europe, North America and Japan. He made his U.S. debut in 1991 as soloist with Andrew Parrott and his Classical Band in New York City. Lubimov has since played piano concerti with the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the Toronto Symphony, and with the Philharmonics of Helsinki, Israel, Munich and St. Petersburg, the Royal Philharmonic in London, Russian National Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonie de Radio France, and the Deutsches Symphonieorchester Berlin. He plays with the most important international conductors, including Ashkenazy, Järvi, Kondrashin, Hogwood, Mackerras, Nagano, Norrington, Pletnev, Saraste, Salonen, Janovski and Tortelier. Alexei Lubimov has also given historic performances with the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Wiener Akademie and the Collegium Vocale Gent. In recent seasons Alexei Lubimov has given numerous solo recitals and concerts with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, the Russian National Orchestra in Moscow and the Tonkünstlerorchester in the Great Hall of Vienna's Musikverein. A renowned chamber musician, he partners with Andreas Staier, Natalia Gutman, Peter Schreier, Heinrich Schiff, Christian Tetzlaff, Gidon Kremer, Ivan Monighetti, and Wieland Kuijken.

Alexei Lubimov's numerous recordings include piano duets with Andreas Staier on Teldec and a highly praised recording of the complete Mozart piano sonatas (on fortepiano) on Erato. His recordings have been issued on the Melodia, Erato, BIS, Sony, ECM and Harmonia Mundi labels, with repertoire by Beethoven, Schubert, Chopin and Brahms, as well as music of the 20th century. Since 2003 he has recorded regularly for ECM, producing CDs of particular note: *Der Bote*, with music of Liszt, Glinka and CPE Bach alongside John Cage and Tigran Mansurian; Arvo Pärt's *Lamentate* with the Stuttgart Radio Symphony; *Messe Noir* with music of Stravinsky, Shostakovich, Prokofiev and Scriabin; and *Misteriosos* with music of Silvestrov, Ustvolskaya and Pärt. In July 2012 ECM New Music released his recording of Debussy Preludes, and he has since recorded music of Haydn, Beethoven, Schubert, Satie, Scriabin, Berg, Webern and Ives. In December 2015 the Russian pianist became the first recipient of a new Cage Cunningham Fellowship administered through the Baryshnikov Arts Center. He will use his award to commission new pieces from the Russian composers Anton Batagov, Pavel Karmanov and Sergei Zagny, and the American composers Bryce Dessner and Julia Wolfe.

Armenian-born violinist **Movses Pogossian** made his American debut in 1990 performing the Tchaikovsky Concerto with the Boston Pops, about which Richard Dyer of the Boston Globe wrote: "There is freedom in his playing, but also taste and discipline. It was a fiery, centered, and highly musical performance..." Pogossian is a prizewinner of the 1986 Tchaikovsky International Competition, and the youngest-ever First Prize winner of the 1985 USSR National Violin Competition, previous winners of which included David Oistrakh and Gidon Kremer. An active chamber musician, Mr. Pogossian has performed with members of the Tokyo, Kronos, and Brentano string quartets, and with such artists as Kim Kashkashian, Jeremy Denk, Lynn Harrell, Ani and Ida Kavafian, Rohan de Saram, and Fred Sherry. He frequently collaborates with the Apple Hill Chamber Players, teaching annually at their summer music festival in New Hampshire. Movses Pogossian is the Artistic Director of the critically acclaimed Dilijan Chamber Music Series, which performs at Zipper Hall in downtown Los Angeles, and is currently in its eleventh season.

Passionately committed to new music, Movses Pogossian has premiered over 50 works, and works closely with composers such as G. Kurtág, T. Mansurian, J. Harbison, A. R. Thomas, L. Segerstam, P. Chihara, V. Sharafyan, and A. Avanesov. In Los Angeles, Movses Pogossian frequently performs on Monday Evening Concerts, and is the recipient of the 2011 Forte Award, given for outstanding contributions to the promotion of new music. His discography includes solo violin CDs "Blooming Sounds" and "In Nomine", both on Albany label, as well as G. Kurtág's monumental "Kafka Fragments" on Bridge Records, which includes a unique video documentary on the work with the composer. In his review of the recording, Paul Griffiths writes: "...remarkable is Pogossian's contribution, which is always beautiful, across a great range of colors and gestures, and always seems on the edge of speaking—or beyond." Recent and upcoming releases include Complete Works for Violin by Stefan Wolpe, and a Schoenberg/Webern DVD, recorded at Schoenberg's Brentwood home with Kim Kashkashian and Rohan de Saram.

Since his studies at the Komitas Conservatory in Armenia and the Tchaikovsky Conservatory of Music in Moscow, Mr. Pogossian has held teaching positions at Duquesne, Bowling Green, Wayne State, and SUNY Buffalo Universities. His principal teachers were L. Zorian, V. Mokatsian, V. Klimov, and legendary Louis Krasner. Movses Pogossian is currently Professor of Violin at the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. He lives in Glendale with his wife, Los Angeles Philharmonic violinist Varty Manouelian, and their three children.

**Clive Greensmith**, cellist, joined the Tokyo String Quartet in 1999 and has performed with the quartet at the most prestigious venues and concert series across the globe. Previously, he has held the position of principal cellist of London's Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, and as a soloist has appeared with the London Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic, Seoul Philharmonic, and the RAI Orchestra of Rome among others. He has collaborated with distinguished musicians such as Leon Fleisher, Claude Frank, Steven Isserlis, Lynn Harrell, Alicia de Larrocha, Midori, Andrés Schiff and Pinchas Zukerman. A regular visitor to many international festivals, Mr. Greensmith has performed at the Marlboro Music festival, The Salzburg Festival, the Edinburgh Festival, the Pacific Music Festival, and Music at Menlo. Mr. Greensmith's recording of works by Brahms and Schumann with Boris Berman was recently released on the Biddulph label. Recordings with the Tokyo String Quartet include the complete Beethoven quartets, and the Mozart 'Prussian' quartets. Mr. Greensmith has served on the faculties of the Royal Northern College of Music, Yehudi Menuhin School, San Francisco Conservatory of Music, the Manhattan School of Music and the Yale School of Music. He is currently Professor of Cello and Co-Director of Chamber Music at the Colburn School and was a jury member at the 2015 Carl Nielsen Chamber Music Competition in Copenhagen. A recording of clarinet trios featuring works by Beethoven and Brahms with Jon Nakamatsu and Jon Manasse was released by Harmonia Mundi in the Fall of 2014.

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