

PROGRAM

ONE HUNDRED TWENTIETH SEASON

Chicago Symphony Orchestra

Riccardo Muti Music Director

Pierre Boulez Helen Regenstein Conductor Emeritus

Yo-Yo Ma Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant

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Thursday, December 2, 2010, at 8:00

Friday, December 3, 2010, at 8:00

Saturday, December 4, 2010, at 8:00

Pierre Boulez Conductor

Christine Brewer Soprano

Nancy Maultsby Mezzo-soprano

Lance Ryan Tenor

Mikhail Petrenko Bass

Paul Jacobs Organ

Chicago Symphony Chorus

Duain Wolfe Director

Schoenberg

Transfigured Night, Op. 4

INTERMISSION

Janáček

Glagolitic Mass

Intrada

Úvod

Gospodi pomiluj

Slava

Věřuju

Svet

Agneče Božij

Varhany (Organ Solo)

Intrada

CHRISTINE BREWER

NANCY MAULTSBY

LANCE RYAN

MIKHAIL PETRENKO

PAUL JACOBS

CHICAGO SYMPHONY CHORUS

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Arnold Schoenberg

Born September 13, 1874, Vienna, Austria.

Died July 13, 1951, Brentwood, California.

Transfigured Night, Op. 4

Arnold Schoenberg finished this music in December 1899. Written on the eve of a new century and on the threshold of artistic revolution, *Verklärte Nacht* (Transfigured night) marks a turning point in the history of music. It's one of the last great romantic works, and, at the same time, points to the future. Schoenberg was only twenty-five, and this music was his calling card; even though it's his most traditional work, it made him few friends.

As soon as he completed *Transfigured Night* (in its first version for string sextet), Schoenberg submitted the score to the Vienna Composers' Guild, whose members refused to perform the piece because it included a dissonant

chord that they couldn't find in their textbooks. The sextet was finally played in March 1902 by a group of Viennese musicians organized by Arnold Rosé, the composer's brother-in-law. Like a number of other works that have proven seminal, at its premiere *Transfigured Night* provoked catcalls and fistfights and ended in a riot. One critic compared it to "a calf with six feet, such as one sees often at a fair." (Many years later, Schoenberg pointed out that six players actually possess twelve feet.) Another observer commented that "it sounds as if someone had smeared the score of *Tristan* while it was still wet."

Despite the disastrous reception, Rosé decided to repeat *Transfigured*

COMPOSED

1899, as a sextet for two violins, two violas, and two cellos

arranged for string orchestra in 1917, revised in 1943

FIRST PERFORMANCE

March 18, 1902, Vienna, as a sextet

March 26, 1919, Vienna, orchestral version

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCE

February 24, 1922, Frederick Stock conducting

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCE

September 27, 2003, Daniel Barenboim conducting

CSO PERFORMANCES, ARNOLD SCHOENBERG CONDUCTING

February 8 & 9, 1934

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

29 minutes

CSO RECORDINGS

1957, Fritz Reiner conducting, *From the Archives*, vol. 1

1994, Daniel Barenboim conducting, Teldec

Night two years later. One day during a rehearsal, Gustav Mahler wandered in to listen; he was a complete stranger to Schoenberg and had never heard a note of his music. Mahler was bowled over by the piece, and the two composers struck up a friendship, even though Schoenberg didn't care for Mahler's symphonies. (He had recently heard the Fourth.) Schoenberg often visited the Mahlers' apartment for dinner and shop talk. Alma Mahler later remembered terrible arguments at the piano and that some evenings ended abruptly, with Schoenberg storming out. (Mahler once asked her never to readmit "that conceited puppy.") But Schoenberg earned the support and respect of Mahler, his senior by fourteen years; "He is young and perhaps he is right," Gustav told Alma. In time, Schoenberg changed his mind about Mahler's music, too. In 1910, when Mahler turned fifty, Schoenberg sent him a long letter: "I cannot help remembering, with much distress, that in earlier days I so often annoyed you by being at variance with you," he wrote. "Perhaps it was shortsightedness, perhaps contrariness? Perhaps too it was love, for with all this I have always venerated you awfully."

Like Mahler, who regularly composed at top speed, Schoenberg wrote *Transfigured Night* in three weeks. (Schoenberg never forgot Mahler's comment that he composed the entire Eighth Symphony as if from dictation in just two months.) Schoenberg drew his inspiration from a poem by Richard Dehmel, whose collection *Woman*

and World had shocked the literary establishment when it was published in 1896. Schoenberg was intoxicated by Dehmel's ecstatic verse and liberal ideas, and he set several of the poems as songs. "Your poems have had a decisive influence on my development as a composer," he wrote to Dehmel more than a decade later. "They were what first made me try to find a new tone in the lyrical mode. Or rather I found it without even looking, simply by reflecting in music what your poems stirred up in me."

The poem that affected Schoenberg most deeply and inspired him to write *Transfigured Night* is "Zwei Menschen" (Two people). A couple walks together through a cold, moonlit forest. The woman speaks: she is carrying another man's child. Longing for fulfillment as a woman, she gave herself to a stranger. Now, as life's revenge, she is finally brought together with a man she loves and who also loves her. The man tells her not to feel remorse—the strength of their love will include her child. They embrace and walk on in the brilliant moonlight.

Schoenberg sensed that the eroticism and rapture of Dehmel's poem would best be expressed through music without words. It was his masterstroke not to write an orchestral tone poem—like those then all the rage by Richard Strauss—but a piece of chamber music, normally the most abstract of genres. The idea of writing program music for a string sextet was as novel as anything in the score itself, though it was Schoenberg's

music that caused all the controversy. Schoenberg eventually conceded that *Transfigured Night* gained in stature, without losing any of its intimacy, when played by larger forces, and, in 1917, he published the version for full string orchestra that is performed at these concerts.

Schoenberg wasn't interested in musically representing the events in Dehmel's poem, but rather in capturing its powerful emotions, the moonlit night, and an overwhelming sense of destiny. Later, Schoenberg pointed out a few correspondences between the verses and the score, but he always maintained that *Transfigured Night* worked equally well as pure music. In fact, the first time Dehmel heard Schoenberg's score he became so absorbed in the music that he forgot to follow his own poem, which he had open on his lap.

To our ears, Schoenberg's music logically extends the language of Brahms and Wagner (Schoenberg later confessed he was under their spell at the time), but at first audiences only heard it as a distortion of a great tradition. *Transfigured Night* begins in D minor and progresses circuitously, like the couple's walk, toward the brilliance of D major. Schoenberg's sense of drama and evolving emotions is uncanny. At the heart of the piece, just before the man addresses the woman, there is a moment of total silence. The ending—the “high, bright night” of Dehmel's poem—is music of incomparable delicacy and splendor.

Ultimately *Transfigured Night*—almost alone of all Schoenberg's

compositions—was accepted into the repertory. In 1937, Schoenberg wrote of its singular success in an essay entitled, “How One Becomes Lonely.” “My *Transfigured Night* . . .,” he writes, “has made me a kind of reputation. From it I can enjoy (even among opponents) some appreciation which the works of my later periods would not have procured for me so soon. This work has been heard, especially in its version for orchestra, a great many times. But certainly nobody has heard it as often as I have heard this complaint: ‘If only he had continued to compose in this style!’ ” Schoenberg always protested that he still did and that people didn't listen carefully enough to recognize it, but, in fact, he knew that *Transfigured Night* would always be his most popular composition.

Gustav Mahler remained an ardent supporter of Schoenberg's work; perhaps he also found comfort in their shared understanding of public rejection. Mahler didn't understand Schoenberg's music himself, but he was a faithful and loyal friend. No doubt he saw himself in Schoenberg's willingness to risk everything for the music he felt compelled to write. “I was not destined to continue in the manner of *Transfigured Night*,” Schoenberg said nearly a half century later. “The Supreme Commander had ordered me on a harder road.”

Mahler continued to attend concerts of Schoenberg's music; during a performance of the First Chamber Symphony in 1907 he attempted to silence the rowdy audience, and at the end he stood

at the front of his box, applauding, until everyone had left the hall. During the last year of his life, he lent Schoenberg 800 crowns, approximately one year's rent. He surely guessed that things would only grow worse for his friend. In his final year, Mahler worried: "Who will look after him when I am gone?" When Mahler died in

1911, Schoenberg's career was at a crossroads; recognizing that he had carried music to the edge of tonality, he was uncertain how to go on. For a while, he turned to painting. Most of the pictures are studies of his face, as if he were examining his very existence, but one shows the grave at Mahler's funeral; it is lined with mourners. ■

TRANSFIGURED NIGHT

Richard Dehmel

Two people walk through a bare, cold grove;
The moon keeps pace and draws their gaze.
The moon passes over the tall oak trees,
No wisp of a cloud to dim heaven's light
Into which the black jagged tips reach up.
A woman's voice speaks:

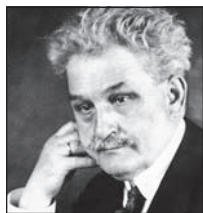
I am carrying a child, but not by you;
I walk beside you in a state of sin.
I have done myself the most grievous wrong.
No longer did I believe in joy
And yet had a great desire
For a meaning to life, for a mother's joys
And duties; and so, with a shudder,
I allowed my sex to be held
In a stranger's embrace
And even thought myself blessed.
Now life has had its revenge:
Now I have met you, yes, you!

She walks on, stumbling.
She gazes aloft, the moon keeps pace.
Her somber gaze is drowned in light.
A man's voice speaks:

May the child you've conceived
Not burden your soul.
See how brightly the universe shines!
Its radiance casts its halo around us!
You're drifting beside me upon a cold sea,
Yet there passes a glow of inmost warmth
From you to me, and from me to you.
That warmth will transfigure the
 stranger's child,
And you'll bear me that child, begot by me;
You've transfused me with radiance
And made me a child myself.

He puts his arms around her strong hips,
Their breath commingles in an airy kiss,
Two people walk on through the high,
 bright night!

Translation by Stewart Spencer



Leoš Janáček

Born July 3, 1854, Hochwald (Hukvaldy), Northern Moravia.
Died August 12, 1928, Moravska Ostravá, Czechoslovakia.

Glagolitic Mass

Leoš Janáček is music's most extraordinary late starter—a composer who completed his earliest important score at the age of fifty, first attracted international attention at sixty-one, and entered the most prolific and adventurous stage of his career as he neared his seventies. It is the works of his final years, composed in the 1920s, which have given him a place among the important composers of his time.

Janáček was born in 1854, the year Liszt published his revolutionary B minor piano sonata and Wagner began *Die Walküre*. His contemporaries were Elgar, Humperdinck, Mahler, and Wolf—composers who all finished their life's work before Janáček hit

his stride. But artistically, Janáček doesn't belong to their generation. The period of his most significant and original work is the time of Berg, Ravel, Stravinsky, Bartók, and Schoenberg—younger composers forging a new language—and the era of landmarks such as Berg's *Wozzeck*, Stravinsky's *Les noces*, and Schoenberg's first twelve-tone pieces.

Janáček composed the *Glagolitic Mass* in 1926, at the age of seventy-two. He had first found his voice and developed his personal harmonic and melodic style writing the opera *Jenůfa*, which he worked on for nearly ten years beginning in 1894. (His idiosyncratic language is highly indebted to the study of Moravian folk music he undertook

COMPOSED

October 1926, based on a mass for chorus and organ left incomplete in 1908; revised 1927. Paul Wingfield's reconstruction of the 1926 score is used at these performances.

FIRST PERFORMANCE

December 5, 1927, Brno (then in Czechoslovakia, now in Moravia)

FIRST CSO PERFORMANCE

May 14, 1970, Charles Mackerras conducting

MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCE

November 4, 2000, Pierre Boulez conducting

INSTRUMENTATION

soprano, alto, tenor, and bass soloists; mixed chorus; organ soloist; four flutes and three piccolos; two oboes and english horn; three clarinets

and bass clarinet; three bassoons and contrabassoon; four horns; four trumpets; three trombones and tuba; timpani; percussion (small drum, triangle, tam-tam, cymbals, bells); two harps; celesta; strings

APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

41 minutes

CSO RECORDING

2000, Pierre Boulez conducting, *From the Archives*, vol. 19

more than a decade before the famous explorations by Bartók and Kodály.) He completed the score in 1903, the year he turned fifty. *Jenůfa* was premiered the following year in Brno, a provincial capital far from the centers of new music activities, and it didn't attract attention in the larger music world until it was staged in Prague in 1916. After that, Janáček quickly found international fame.

In the years immediately following World War I, Janáček worked in a sudden, unexpected flurry of creative energy and boldness, as if to make up for lost time. This wasn't so much an Indian summer, like the renaissance of Strauss's last years, as the final realization of a slowly maturing genius—a thrilling climax to a faltering, often exceptional career. Janáček may have been inspired, as is often claimed, by his love for Kamila Stösslová, the wife of an antique dealer whom he met in 1917. (Although Kamila, who was thirty-eight years younger than the composer, didn't return his affection, he persisted in thinking of her as his love and his muse, and he wrote to her regularly—some seven hundred unanswered letters—until his death.) In the last eight years of his life, he composed most of the music for which he is known today, including four powerful operas, two revealing string quartets (subtitled *Kreutzer* and *Intimate Letters*), the Sinfonietta that soon became an orchestral staple, and his single large-scale sacred work—the *Glagolitic Mass*.

The *Glagolitic Mass* was the most unexpected product of Janáček's

surprising late-in-life creative surge, particularly since he had long claimed to be an agnostic. When a Prague music critic reported that the composer, “an old man, now a firm believer, feels with increasing urgency that his life's work should not lack an element expressing his relationship to God,” Janáček shot back a terse reply by postcard: “No old man, no believer!”, later adding “Not till I see for myself.” Until the day in 1921 when Janáček heard the feeble music in the church near his hometown of Hukvaldy, he had given little thought to composing religious music. Once, in 1907, he had begun to compose a Latin mass, simply to show his composition students how to set a sacred text. At the time, he had told them to “write Latin, but think Czech.” With the *Glagolitic Mass*, he took his own suggestion one step farther, choosing to set not the traditional Latin words, but the Old Church Slavonic text that was no longer in use. It was a way of identifying with his roots and his nationality without openly embracing religion. “I wanted to express faith in the certainty (certainty of survival, that is) of the nation,” he wrote later, “not on a religious basis, but on a moral one which calls God to witness.”

The work was drafted between August 2 and 17, and Janáček was pleased to discover that he could make good use of the music he had already composed for his 1907 Latin mass, even though he was now using Old Church Slavonic words. In September, he extensively revised the score twice, each time

erasing more and more traces of the earlier model, adding bolder effects and stronger colors. Janáček also changed his title from *Missa*



Leoš Janáček with his wife Zdenka

slavnija to *Missa glagoljskaja*—from *Slavonic* to *Glagolitic* Mass—in both cases retaining the subtitle he borrowed from Beethoven, *Missa solemnis*. (Janáček had conducted Beethoven's great mass during his early years in Brno.)

Sometime in November, Janáček decided to add a new movement for solo organ, and then he put the work aside.

“My mind has never been so empty of ideas before now,” he wrote to the novelist Max Brod just before the new year. “Ordinarily, as I am finishing one work I am already starting another.” By February, Janáček had begun a new opera, *From the House of the Dead*, that he wouldn't live to finish, but in May, when the premiere of the mass was announced for the following December in Brno, he turned again to this work. He now made still more revisions, bringing the score to its final shape. But once rehearsals got underway in November, Janáček discovered that

he had written music his performers often couldn't manage. Over the weeks leading up to the premiere, Janáček was forced to make many changes, large and relatively insignificant ones alike, in a last-ditch attempt to simplify his score in the hope of a decent performance.

The *Glagolitic* Mass that was presented in Brno that December was a mere shadow of the fearlessly original work he had envisioned. With the composer's death just eight months after the premiere, the hope of restoring the *Glagolitic* Mass to its original form died, too. As a result, the work that has been performed for decades represents Janáček's desperation effort—a revision that weakened the dramatic power and obscured the most radical features of his work. It is only with Paul Wingfield's recent reconstruction of the original score, which is performed at these concerts, that the *Glagolitic* Mass can take its rightful place not only among Janáček's most adventurous works, but also alongside the great monuments of sacred music.

To accommodate the inadequate Brno performers, Janáček cut, altered, or toned down nearly every page of his score. When the orchestra members couldn't manage the rhythmic structure of the *Úvod*, which boldly layered patterns of three, five, and seven notes, he lined them up in neat, regular groups. He redid the outer sections of the *Gospodi* (Kyrie), which were written in 5/4, in common 4/4. In the *Veřuju* (Credo), he condensed the orchestral interlude that precedes the account of the crucifixion,

softening the violent interjections originally led by three sets of timpani. The powerful climax of the *Svet* (Sanctus) was pruned by fourteen measures, undercutting its harmonic plan. Janáček made many other changes, few as large or as damaging as these, but each one chipped away at the radical and thrilling sound world of his imagination.

Janáček's original plan was to begin and end with festive, ceremonial orchestral music—a true intrada. (In church, this would accompany the entrance and exit of the clergy.) Next, and next-to-last, he placed two more instrumental movements—an “introduction” to the mass and, at its conclusion, the organ solo he added after he had written the other movements. But in the years after the composer's death, his written instructions were misinterpreted, and the intrada that he envisioned as both prelude and postlude was played only at the end, destroying the intended symmetry. (At these performances, as at the two given during Janáček's own lifetime, the intrada frames the rest of the mass.)

Even in their sanitized versions, the five movements of the mass itself still stunned the first audiences with their bold, theatrical strokes and extraordinary sonorities. They are stronger and stranger still as Janáček originally conceived them. Janáček was clearly not thinking of the church as his performance space—this is music meant for the concert hall and driven by the composer's uncanny dramatic instinct and operatic

imagination. Like a man used to writing his own opera librettos, Janáček even adapts the text to suit his vision, omitting lines at will and leaving his audience not with the traditional words of benediction, “Grant us peace,” but simply, even darkly, with “have mercy on us.” And he follows that with a wild, raging solo for organ that shatters any lingering notion that this mass could be performed as part of a conventional liturgical service.

A word about the title, which is something of a misnomer. It was Janáček's intention to use the language of the first Christian missionaries to the Slavs, Cyril and Methodius, ninth-century leaders who translated parts of the Bible into the earliest written Slavic language, known as Old Church Slavonic. For this purpose, Cyril invented a new alphabet called “Glagolitic” (from “glagolv” for “word”). Neither Janáček, his performers, nor his audience knew how to read this obsolete, ornate script, which had long been abandoned. But Janáček liked the word and its connotations of history and tradition, and that is the title he kept, despite the many changes he made in the score itself. ■

Phillip Huscher is the program annotator for the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

GLAGOLITIC MASS

GOSPODI POMILUJ

Gospodi, pomiluj.
Chrste, pomiluj.
Gospodi, pomiluj.

SLAVA

Slava vo vyšních Bogu i na zeml'i mir,
člověkom blagovol'eniya. Chvalim
te, blagoslovl'ajem te, klaňajem ti
se, slavoslovim te, chvaly vzdajem
tebě velikyje radi slavy tvojeje, Bože,
Otče Vsemogyj.

Gospodi, Synu jedinorodnyj,
Isuse Chrste; Gospodi Bože, Agneče
Božij, Synu Oteč, vzeml'ej grěchy mira,
pomiluj nas. Primi mol'eniya naša.
Sědej o desnuju Otca, pomiluj nas.

Jako ty jedin svet; ty jedin Gospod;
ty jedin vyšnij, Isuse Chrste so Svetym
Duchom, vo slavě Boga Otca. Amin.

VĚRUJU

Věřuju v jedinogo Boga, Otca
Vsemoguštago, tvorca nebu i zeml'i,
vidimym všem i nevidimym. Amin.
Věřuju i v jedinogo Gospoda Isusa
Chrsta, Syna Božija jedinorodnago, i ot
Otca roždenago přězde všech věk,

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest, and peace
to his people on earth. We adore you,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory, Lord God,
heavenly king.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the
Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you
take away the sin of the world, have
mercy on us. Receive our prayer. You
are seated at the right hand of the
Father, have mercy on us.

For you alone are the Holy One, you
alone are the Lord, you alone are the
Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy
Spirit, in the glory of God the Father.
Amen.

CREED

I believe in one God, the Father
almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of
all that is seen and unseen. Amen. And
I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the
only Son of God, eternally begotten of
the Father; before all ages,

Boga ot Boga, Svět ot Světa, Boga
istina ot Boga istinago, roždena, ne
stvořena, jedinosuštna Otcu, imže vsa
byše; iže nas radi člověk i radi našego
spasenija snide s nebes,

i vplti se ot Ducha Sveta iz
Marije Děvy, věruju, raspet že za ny
mučen i pogreben byst; i voskrse v tretij
den po Pisaniju,

i vzide na nebo, sedit o desnuju
Otcu; i paky imat priti sudit živym i
mrtvym so slavoju; jegože cěsarstviju
nebudet konca.

Věruju i v Ducha Svetago, Gospoda
i životvoreštago, ot Otcu i Syna
ischodeštago, s Otcem že i Synom
kupno poklaňajema i soslavima, iže
glagolal jest Proroky;

i jedinu Svetuju, Katoličesku i
Apostolsku Crkov; i spovědaju jedino
krštenije v otpuštenije grěchov;

i čaju voskrsenija mrtvych i života
buduštago věka. Amin.

God from God, Light from Light, true
God from true God; begotten, not
made; one in Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
Who for us men and for our salvation,
came down from heaven:

by the power of the Holy Spirit he
was born of the Virgin Mary. I believe
for our sake he was crucified, he
suffered, and was buried. On the third
day he rose again in fulfillment of
the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven and is seated
at the right hand of the Father. He will
come again in glory to judge the living
and the dead, and his kingdom will
have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the
Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds
from the Father and the Son. With the
Father and the Son he is worshiped
and glorified. He has spoken through
the prophets;

And in one, holy, catholic, and
apostolic Church; and I acknowledge
one baptism for the forgiveness of
sins; and I look for the resurrection of
the dead,

and the life of the world to come.
Amen.

SVET

Svet, svet, svet, Gospod Bog Sabaot,
plna sut nebesa, zeml'a slavy tvojeje.
Blagoslovl'en gredyj v ime Gospodne.

Osana vo vyšnich.

AGNEČE BOŽIJ

Agneče Božij, pomiluj nas.
Agneče Božij, vzeml'ej grěchy mira.

Agneče Božij, pomiluj nas.

SANCTUS

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of
the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

AGNUS DEI

Lamb of God, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sins of
the world.

Lamb of God, have mercy on us.