

## PROGRAM

ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-SECOND 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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Wednesday, November 28, 2012, at 6:30 (Afterwork Masterworks, performed with no intermission)

**Sir Mark Elder** Conductor

**Dvořák** *The Golden Spinning Wheel*, Op. 109

**Shostakovich** Symphony No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 10

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra is grateful to WBBM Newsradio 780 and 105.9 FM for its generous support as media sponsor of the Afterwork Masterworks series.

Thursday, November 29, 2012, at 8:00

Friday, November 30, 2012, at 1:30

Saturday, December 1, 2012, at 8:00

**Sir Mark Elder** Conductor

**Alice Coote** Mezzo-soprano

### **Dvořák**

*The Golden Spinning Wheel*, Op. 109

### **Berlioz**

*Les nuits d'été*, Op. 7

Villanelle

Le spectre de la rose

Sur les lagunes

Absence

Au cimetière (Clair de lune)

L'île inconnue

ALICE COOTE

## INTERMISSION

### **Shostakovich**

Symphony No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 10

Allegretto—Allegro non troppo

Allegro

Lento—Largo—Lento—

Allegro molto

This program is partially supported by grants from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts.



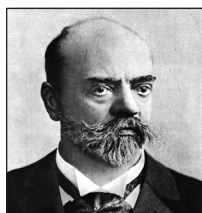
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## Antonín Dvořák

Born September 8, 1841, Mühllausen, Bohemia  
(now Nelahozeves, Czech Republic).

Died May 1, 1904, Prague, Czechoslovakia.

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### *The Golden Spinning Wheel, Op. 109*

**A**ntonín Dvořák wasn't the first composer to reject the family business for a life in music. Robert Schumann was the only one of four brothers to abandon his father's book publishing company for another career. František Dvořák, a butcher in a village just north of Prague, also expected his son to continue in the trade. František played the zither and even wrote a few tunes for the local band, but he didn't think of composing as an occupation. He was irate when his thirteen-year-old son dropped out of his apprenticeship as a butcher and moved to nearby Zlonice to study music.

Antonín Dvořák learned to play the violin as a small boy, and he composed marches and waltzes for the village band. In Zlonice,

he studied piano, organ, and viola, eventually becoming a decent enough violist to earn a living as an orchestra musician when he couldn't make any money from his compositions. After he moved to Prague in 1857, he became principal viola in the orchestra for the new Provisional Theater (later the National Theater). For the rest of his life, he treasured the memory of playing a concert there in 1863 under his idol, Richard Wagner, which included the overture to *Tannhäuser*, the prelude to *Tristan and Isolde*, and excerpts from *Die Meistersinger* and *Die Walküre*. In 1871, Dvořák left the orchestra to devote more time to composition, but he soon realized that he would have to teach to get by. For many years, his father doubted the

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#### COMPOSED

1896

#### FIRST PERFORMANCES

June 3, 1896, Prague

(private)

October 26, London (public)

#### FIRST CSO

##### PERFORMANCE (U.S. PREMIERE)

January 1, 1897, Auditorium

Theatre. Theodore

Thomas conducting

##### MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCE

October 28, 2006,

Orchestra Hall. Daniel

Harding conducting

#### INSTRUMENTATION

two flutes and piccolo, two oboes and english horn, two clarinets, two bassoons and contrabassoon, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones and tuba, timpani, bass drum, cymbals, triangle, harp, strings

#### APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

27 minutes

wisdom of his son's choice of music over the life of a butcher.

Then in 1873, Dvořák's works began to attract attention. The successful premiere of his patriotic cantata *Heirs of the White Mountain* on March 9 launched his fame in his homeland. Later that year, he married Anna Cermáková, the sister of the Prague actress Josefina, who had, nearly a decade before, rebuffed his advances. (Like Mozart and Haydn, he married not his first love, but her sister.) In 1874, Dvořák took stock of his situation: he had begun to taste success; his wife was pregnant with their first child; and he looked forward to the pleasures, comforts, and traditions of family life. But he craved recognition and he needed money. In July, he entered fifteen of his newest works in a competition for the Austrian State Music Prize, a government award designed to assist struggling young artists. The judges included Johannes Brahms, the biggest name in Viennese music. Dvořák won the first prize of four hundred gulden, and he felt a kind of encouragement and validation that money can't buy.

Over the next few years, several of Dvořák's works were published, first in Prague and then more widely, and his music quickly became well known throughout Europe and in the United States. By the time he accepted Jeannette Thurber's invitation to take up temporary residence in the United States, beginning in 1892, he was enjoying extraordinary critical and popular success. Dvořák's American years cemented his

reputation in this country, and also inspired some of his best-loved music, including the *American String Quartet* and his last symphony—the ninth, known as *From the New World*. After he returned home in April 1895, Dvořák composed two last string quartets that were his final essays in abstract music, cleared his head, and then unexpectedly turned his attention to the symphonic poem.

This late-in-life career move was inspired by the rediscovery of *The Garland*, a collection of ballads by the nationalist poet Karel Jaromír Erben—poetry that Dvořák had loved for years, but that spoke to him even more forcefully now that he was back in his homeland. In 1896, Dvořák composed four symphonic poems based on tales drawn from Erben's anthology; a fifth, not based on Erben, followed the next year. They were his last orchestral works.

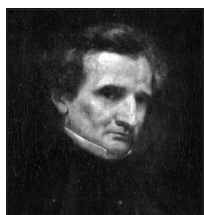
**T**he *Golden Spinning Wheel* is the third of the symphonic poems that Dvořák wrote in the early months of 1896 (he began all three during the first days of January, and worked on them at the same time for several weeks). In late February, after he had finished the first two Erben pieces and was still at work on *The Golden Spinning Wheel*, Dvořák visited Brahms, who urged him to move his family to Vienna—an invitation that Dvořák couldn't seriously consider, since he now felt more attached than ever to his native land. We don't know if Dvořák told Brahms, the great symphonist—and, pointedly,

the composer of no symphonic poems—of the new direction his music had taken.

Taking a cue from Liszt's pioneering tone poems, Dvořák assigns a musical theme to each central character in the action, allowing it to be transformed by the events in the unfolding drama. (This was also the model for the series of new orchestral works begun by Richard Strauss in the preceding decade; he was composing *Also sprach Zarathustra* at the time Dvořák was working on the Erben scores.) Although the shape of Erben's narrative largely determined the form of *The Golden Spinning Wheel*, the influence of his language had a more profound and subtle impact on Dvořák's music. Throughout the score, the rise and fall of his melodic lines suggest the declamation of Erben's verses (certain passages of the poem could almost be sung to Dvořák's corresponding themes). This is similar to the "speech-melody" that Janáček was developing in his operatic writing at this time.

**T**he *Golden Spinning Wheel* tells the tale of a young king, out hunting on horseback, who stops at a cottage to ask for a drink of water, and, immediately falling in love with Dornicka, the young girl at the spinning wheel, becomes

caught in an ill-fated romance. When the king later returns to pursue Dornicka, he encounters her stepmother, who has a young, unmarried daughter of her own. In a turn of events that in our time would surely dominate the media for weeks, the stepmother takes the two girls into the woods, murders and dismembers Dornicka, and sends her own daughter off to marry the king. (Dornicka's feet, hands, and eyes are later sent along to the king's castle.) After the wedding—celebrated by a wonderfully Dvořákian polka—the king goes off to war. In the meantime, an old man, wandering in the woods, discovers the remains of Dornicka's body and is determined to bring her back to life, a make-over process that ultimately involves exchanging a golden spinning wheel for her feet, a golden distaff for her hands, and a golden spindle for her eyes. When the king returns from his triumphant wartime action, the spinning wheel begins to play a song describing the crimes committed by the stepmother and her daughter. The king races to the forest, where he finds Dornicka alive and even well, and he takes her back to his castle. Although Erben has the two murderers torn apart by wolves, Dvořák's ending is uncomplicated and unequivocally happy. ■



## Hector Berlioz

Born December 11, 1803, Côte-Saint-André, France.

Died March 8, 1869, Paris, France.

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### *Les nuits d'été*, Op. 7

It's odd that Berlioz, normally the most talkative, opinionated, and revealing of musicians (he was the first major composer to write his memoirs) had so little to say about these extraordinary songs. We don't know why he composed them or for whom—evidently they weren't written on commission or for any specific occasion. Unlike Berlioz's best-known and most characteristic compositions, these are private, even personal works, and he seemed reluctant to put them in the public spotlight. He wrote them first for voice and piano, which only underscored their intimacy—particularly since they were composed right on the heels of the three-movement *Grand symphonie funèbre et triomphale*, an over-the-top, government-commissioned

extravaganza for a military band of two hundred players.

Berlioz began the first of these songs, “Villanelle,” in March 1840, picking a poem by his friend Théophile Gautier, and gradually, over the next few months, set five more of Gautier's texts. That September, he published these six songs under the title *Les nuits d'été* (Summer nights)—an anthology of pieces about love and desire, and, above all, longing. (He made up the title himself, with Gautier's blessing, as well as those of the individual songs.) In June of the following year, Berlioz autographed a book for Marie Recio, a singer of limited talent who soon became his traveling companion and occasional musical partner, and much later his second wife. These pieces don't

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#### COMPOSED

1840–41; orchestrated 1843, 1856

#### FIRST PERFORMANCE

date unknown

#### FIRST CSO PERFORMANCE

December 11, 1903, Auditorium Theatre. (“Sur les lagunes” only) Marguerite Hall, mezzo-soprano; Theodore Thomas conducting

February 28, 1963, Orchestra Hall. (complete) Leontyne Price, soprano; Fritz Reiner conducting

#### MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCE

February 2, 2008, Orchestra Hall. Susan Graham, mezzo-soprano; Pierre Boulez conducting

#### INSTRUMENTATION

solo voice, two flutes, oboe, two clarinets, two bassoons, three horns, harp, strings

#### APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

32 minutes

#### CSO RECORDING

1963. Leontyne Price, soprano; Fritz Reiner conducting. RCA

betray Berlioz's new infatuation with Marie, for they were probably written before the fact, but the attraction of Gautier's texts does suggest unrest in his marriage to Harriet Smithson, and the sense of a great love that has gone cold.

Berlioz has left us little information about his personal life in 1841 and 1842; few letters survive and he passes quickly over these years in his *Memoirs*. He did begin a grand public tour in 1842, starting in Brussels and taking in more than a dozen cities in Germany before he was done. Marie joined him for the entire trip, singing in some of the concerts he conducted; it was for her that he orchestrated one of the Gautier songs, "Absence," which she introduced in Dresden in February 1843. The tour was a great success, and Berlioz was delighted to renew his friendships with Mendelssohn and Wagner and to meet Schumann. (Knowing only his music, and the *Symphonie fantastique* in particular, Schumann had imagined him as a "wilder and more animated man.")

Although Berlioz was still married to Harriet, who had, little more than a decade before, inspired the extraordinary passion of the *Symphonie fantastique*, he now quietly began a new life with Marie. He and Harriet officially separated in 1844; a full decade later he married Marie, exactly one day after finishing his *Memoirs*, in which she is not mentioned once. In 1856, just before undertaking *The Trojans*, his operatic retelling of Virgil's *Aeneid*, Berlioz orchestrated the remaining five songs of *Les nuits*

*d'été* for publication that year in Switzerland. They were never performed as a set during his lifetime, and he heard only the second and fourth songs sung with orchestra.

**W**e don't remember Berlioz as a song composer, but he wrote more than fifty songs, many of them supreme examples of his unsurpassed gift for melody. These six Gautier settings are the only songs Berlioz published as a group. Berlioz didn't think of them as a cycle like Beethoven's *An die ferne Geliebte*, or Schubert's *Winterreise*, or Schumann's *Dichterliebe* (composed the year Berlioz began *Nuits d'été*), with a narrative thread and a strong musical continuity. They are linked, instead, by their poet, a common subject matter, and a certain shared musical atmosphere of delicate, moody colors. Berlioz's decision to orchestrate them as a set, however, was unexpected, and with characteristic vision he created a new form, the orchestral song cycle, which went unnoticed until Mahler picked it up half a century later.

Berlioz arranged the six songs of *Les nuits d'été* with two energetic, sunny ones framing four that are sober and introspective. Berlioz calls for an unusually small orchestra—this isn't the extravagant Berlioz who caused the poet Heinrich Heine to dream of "fabulous empires filled with fabulous sins"—and he uses it with exquisite subtlety and restraint. "Villanelle" is the simplest of songs, and yet Berlioz gives it depth and interest by changing the harmonies and

the orchestration for each verse. The second song, “Le spectre de la rose”—The phantom of the rose—(with a new introduction Berlioz added in the orchestral version), is more complex, beginning with a sumptuous melody that changes character as it goes, disintegrating into recitative at one point, and later soaring in a thrilling climax. The song is brilliantly scored, with shimmering string trills and a gentle, strumming harp, appearing for the only time in the cycle, to announce paradise.

“Sur les lagunes” (On the lagoons), over rising and falling half steps that suggest a rocking boat, is built around a mournful refrain, like a cry of despair. Berlioz

leaves the song unanswered, ending with a dominant chord that never resolves. It is the very plainness of “Absence,” with its slowly changing orchestral chords and its repeated childlike plea (“come back”) that makes it so naked and powerful. “Au cimetière” (In the cemetery) moves even deeper into despair, with its numb, pulsing accompaniment and the ghostly shiver of strings as memory brushes past. The playful questioning of “L’île inconnue” (The unknown isle) comes as welcome relief, even if the poet can’t suggest where love will last forever. At the end, we sense that it is Berlioz himself who sails off, with the wind at his back, in search of a new beginning. ■

## LES NUITS D'ÉTÉ

### VILLANELLE

Quand viendra la saison nouvelle,  
Quand auront disparu les froids,  
Tous les deux nous irons, ma belle,  
Pour cueillir le muguet aux bois;

Sous nos pieds égrenant les perles

Que l'on voit au matin trembler,

Nous irons écouter les merles siffler.

Le printemps est venu, ma belle,  
C'est le mois des amants béni;  
Et l'oiseau, satinant son aile,  
Dit des vers au rebord du nid.  
Oh! viens donc sur ce banc de mousse  
Pour parler de nos beaux amours,  
Et dis-moi de ta voix si douce:  
Toujours!

## SUMMER NIGHTS

### VILLANELLE

When the new season comes  
and the cold weather has gone,  
the pair of us will go, my pretty one,  
to gather lilies of the valley in  
the woods.

Shaking free beneath our feet  
the dewdrops

that one sees a-tremble in the  
early morn,

we will go to hear the blackbirds sing.

Spring has come, my pretty one,  
it is the month that lovers bless,  
and the birds, preening their wings,  
sing verses from the rim of their nest.  
Oh, come then to this mossy bank  
to discourse of our sweet loves,  
and say to me in that gentle voice of  
yours: Forever!

Loin, bien loin égarant nos courses,  
Faisons fuir le lapin caché

Et le daim au miroir des sources  
Admirant son grand bois penché;  
Puis chez nous, tout heureux, tout aisés,

En paniers enlaçant nos doigts,  
Revenons, rapportant des fraises  
des bois.

### LE SPECTRE DE LA ROSE

Soulève ta paupière close  
Qu'effleure un songe virginal!  
Je suis le spectre d'une rose,  
Que tu portais hier au bal.

Tu me pris encore emperlée  
Des pleurs d'argent de l'arrosoir,  
Et parmi la fête étoilée,  
Tu me promenas tout le soir.

Ô toi, qui de ma mort fus cause,  
Sans que tu puisses le chasser,  
Toutes les nuits mon spectre rose  
À ton chevet viendra danser.

Mais ne crains rien, je ne réclame  
Ni messe ni De profundis.  
Ce léger parfum est mon âme,  
Et j'arrive du paradis.

Mon destin fut digne d'envie,  
Et pour avoir un sort si beau  
Plus d'un aurait donné sa vie;

Car sur ton sein j'ai mon tombeau,

Et sur l'albâtre où je repose  
Un poète avec un baiser  
Écrivit: "Ci-gît une rose,  
Que tous les rois vont jalouser."

Straying far, very far from our way,  
startling the timid rabbit from its  
hiding place  
and the deer at the mirroring spring,  
admiring its great lowered antlers;  
all filled with content and happiness,  
then,  
entwining our fingers basketlike,  
homewards we will go, bringing  
wild strawberries.

### THE PHANTOM OF A ROSE

Open your closed lids  
that a virginal dream lightly brushes.  
I am the specter of a rose  
you wore at the ball last eve.

You took me still pearly  
with the watering pot's silvery tears  
and about the starry gathering  
carried me all night.

O you, who caused my death,  
powerless to banish it,  
my rosy spirit every night  
will come to dance by your bedside.

But do not be afraid—I demand  
neither mass nor De profundis.  
This fragile perfume is my soul  
and I come from paradise.

My lot was to be envied,  
and to have so beautiful a fate  
many a one would have rendered up  
his life—  
for my grave is on your breast

and on the alabaster where I lie at rest  
with a kiss a poet  
has written: "Here lies a rose  
that every king will envy."

## **SUR LES LAGUNES**

Ma belle amie est morte.  
Je pleurerai toujours;  
Sous la tombe elle emporte  
Mon âme et mes amours.  
Dans le ciel, sans m'attendre  
Elle s'en retourna;  
L'ange qui l'emmena  
Ne voulut pas me prendre.  
Que mon sort est amer!  
Ah! sans amour s'en aller sur la mer!

La blanche créature  
Est couchée au cercueil;  
Comme dans la nature  
Tout me paraît en deuil!  
La colombe oubliée  
Pleure et songe à l'absent;  
Mon âme pleure et sent  
Qu'elle est dépareillée.  
Que mon sort est amer!  
Ah! sans amour s'en aller sur la mer!

Sur moi la nuit immense  
S'étend comme un linceul,  
Je chante ma romance  
Que le ciel entend seul.  
Ah! comme elle était belle,  
Et comme je l'aimais!  
Je n'aimerai jamais  
Une femme autant qu'elle.  
Que mon sort est amer!  
Ah! sans amour s'en aller sur la mer!

## **ABSENCE**

Reviens, reviens, ma bien-aimée!

Comme une fleur loin du soleil,  
La fleur de ma vie est fermée  
Loin de ton sourire vermeil.

Entre nos coeurs quelle distance!

Tant d'espace entre nos baisers!  
Ô sort amer! Ô dure absence!

## **ON THE LAGOONS**

My dearest love is dead—  
I shall weep forever more.  
Into the grave she takes with her  
my soul and all my love.  
She returned to heaven  
without waiting for me—  
the angel that took her  
would not take me, too.  
How bitter is my fate!  
Alas, to go over the sea without love!

The pure white being  
is lying in her grave.  
Oh, how everything in nature  
seems to me to be in mourning!  
The forsaken dove  
weeps and dreams of its absent mate.  
My soul weeps and feels  
itself to be incomplete.  
How bitter is my fate!  
Alas, to go over the sea without love!

Above me the immensity of night  
spreads like a shroud.  
I chant my lay,  
which is heard by heaven alone.  
Oh, how beautiful she was  
and how I loved her!  
I shall never love another woman  
as I do her.  
How bitter is my fate!  
Alas, to go over the sea without love!

## **ABSENCE**

Come back, come back, my  
best beloved!

Like a flower far from the sun  
my life's flower is shut  
far from your rosy smile.

What a distance there is between  
our hearts!

So much space between our kisses!  
Oh, bitter fate! Oh, cruel absence!

Ô grands désirs inapaisés!

Reviens, reviens, ma bien-aimée! *etc.*

D'ici là-bas que de campagnes,  
Que de villes et de hameaux,  
Que de vallons et de montagnes,  
À lasser le pied des chevaux!

Reviens, reviens, ma bien-aimée! *etc.*

### AU CIMETIÈRE (CLAIR DE LUNE)

Connaissez-vous la blanche tombe,  
Où flotte avec un son plaintif  
L'ombre d'un if?  
Sur l'if une pâle colombe,  
Triste et seule au soleil couchant,  
Chante son chant:

Un air maladivement tendre,  
À la fois charmant et fatal,  
Qui vous fait mal  
Et qu'on voudrait toujours entendre;

Un air comme en soupire aux cieux

L'ange amoureux.

On dirait que l'âme éveillée  
Pleure sous terre à l'unisson  
De la chanson,  
Et du malheur d'être oubliée  
Se plaint dans un roucoulement  
Bien doucement.

Sur les ailes de la musique  
On sent lentement revenir  
Un souvenir.  
Une ombre, une forme angélique,  
Passe dans un rayon tremblant,  
En voile blanc.

Les belles de nuit demi-closes  
Jettent leur parfum faible et doux  
Autour de vous,

Oh, frantic desires unappeased!

Come back, come back, *etc.*

From here to there, so many plains,  
so many towns and hamlets,  
so many valleys and mountains—  
enough to tire the horses' feet!

Come back, come back, *etc.*

### IN THE CEMETERY (MOONLIGHT)

Do you know the white tomb  
where, with plaintive moan, the shadow  
of a yew tree floats?  
On that yew a pale dove,  
sad and solitary, at sundown  
sings its lay:

A refrain sickly tender,  
at once both delightful and deadly,  
that hurts,  
which yet one would fain listen  
to forever—  
an air like the amorous angel  
might sing  
in the heavens.

One would say the soul awakened  
is weeping beneath the sod  
in unison with the song,  
and in a gentle cooing  
complaining of the misery  
of being forgot.

On the music's wing  
one feels a memory  
slowly return—  
a shadow, an angelic form,  
passes in a tremulous beam,  
shrouded in a white veil.

Night-scented blossoms, half open,  
exhale their scent mild and sweet  
about you,

Et le fantôme aux molles poses  
Murmure en vous tendant les bras:  
Tu reviendras!  
Oh! jamais plus, près de la tombe,  
Je n'irai, quand descend le soir.  
Au manteau noir,  
Écouter la pâle colombe  
Chanter su la pointe de l'if  
Son chant plaintif.

### L'ÎLE INCONNUE

Dites, la jeune belle,  
Où voulez-vous aller?  
La voile enfle son aile,  
La brise va souffler.

L'aviron est d'ivoire,  
Le pavillon de moire,  
Le gouvernail d'or fin;  
J'ai pour lest une orange,  
Pour voile une aile d'ange,  
Pour mousse un séraphin.

Dites, la jeune belle, *etc.*

Est-ce dans la Baltique?  
Dans la mer Pacifique?  
Dans l'île de Java?  
Ou bien est-ce Norvège,  
Cueillir la fleur de neige,  
Ou la fleur d'Angsoka?  
Dites, dites, la jeune belle,  
Dites, où voulez-vous aller?

Menez-moi, dit la belle,  
À la rive fidèle  
Où l'on aime toujours!  
Cette rive, ma chère,  
On ne la connaît guère,  
Au pays des amours.

Où voulez-vous aller?  
La brise va souffler.

and the phantom with its  
sluggish gestures  
whispers as it extends to you its arms:  
You will return!  
Oh, never again will I go near  
that tomb, when the somber cloak  
of night descends,  
to listen to the pale dove  
from the summit of the yew tree sing  
its plaintive song!

### THE UNKNOWN ISLE

Tell me, pretty young maid,  
where would you like to go?  
The sail bellies like a wing,  
the breeze is about to blow.

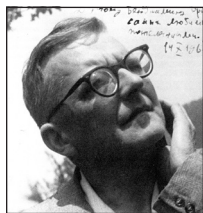
The oar is of ivory,  
the flag of watered silk,  
the rudder of fine gold;  
for ballast I have an orange,  
for sail, an angel's wing,  
for ship's boy, a seraph.

Tell me, pretty young maid, *etc.*

Would it be to the Baltic,  
or to the Pacific,  
or to the isle of Java?  
Or else would it be to Norway,  
to pluck the snow flower?  
Or the flower of Angsoka?  
Tell me, pretty young maid,  
where would you like to go?

Take me, said the pretty young maid,  
to the faithful shore,  
where love endures forever.  
That shore, my dear,  
is scarce known  
in the realm of love.

Where would you like to go?  
The breeze is about to blow.



## Dmitri Shostakovich

Born September 25, 1906, Saint Petersburg, Russia.

Died August 9, 1975, Moscow, Russia.

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### Symphony No. 1 in F Minor, Op. 10

In our amazement at those rare talents who mature early and die young—Mozart, Schubert, and Mendelssohn immediately come to mind—we often undervalue the less spectacular accomplishments of those who burst on the scene at a young age and go on to live long, full, musically rich lives. Dmitri Shostakovich's First Symphony, written when he was eighteen—scarcely a less impressive achievement than the Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, finished when Mendelssohn was just seventeen—inaugurated a symphonic career that spanned nearly half a century and the entirety of Shostakovich's creative life. (The equally significant string quartets, also fifteen in number,

are concentrated in the later part of his career.)

Shostakovich wasn't a child prodigy, but he grew up in an unusually musical home and revealed from an early age exceptional talent, a keen ear, a sharp musical memory, and great discipline—all the essential tools (except, perhaps, for self-confidence and political savvy) for a major career in the music world. His Symphony no. 1 is the first indication of the direction his career would take. Written as a graduation thesis at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory, it brought him international attention. In the years immediately following its first performance in May 1926, it made the rounds of the major orchestras, beginning in

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#### COMPOSED

1925

#### FIRST PERFORMANCE

May 12, 1926, Leningrad

#### FIRST CSO PERFORMANCE

December 28, 1928, Orchestra Hall. Frederick Stock conducting

#### MOST RECENT CSO PERFORMANCE

December 18, 2004, Orchestra Hall. Andrey Boreyko conducting

#### INSTRUMENTATION

three flutes and two piccolos, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones and tuba, timpani, triangle, snare drum, cymbals, bass drum, tam-tam, bells, and strings, with an important role for solo piano

#### APPROXIMATE PERFORMANCE TIME

28 minutes

#### CSO RECORDING

1988. Leonard Bernstein conducting. Deutsche Grammophon

A 1977 performance (for video) conducted by Sir Georg Solti was released by C Major.

this country with the Philadelphia Orchestra in November 1926 and coming to the Chicago Symphony on December 28, 1928. (The program note begins, “The name of Dimitri Szostakowicz will vainly be searched for in the dictionaries of musical biography.” Who at that time could have predicted that Shostakovich—to use the transliteration that quickly became standard—would become a household name?)

Although his development would be governed by nonmusical forces reflecting some of the most dramatic social and political events of our century, the issues in the First Symphony are purely musical. It’s a technical exercise, evidence of a well-earned diploma. (That other matriculation symphony, Haydn’s *Oxford*, was performed when Haydn, at fifty-six, was given an honorary doctorate from Oxford University.)

What’s most remarkable about Shostakovich’s First Symphony isn’t the appearance of so many hallmarks of the composer’s mature style—biting sarcasm, unabashed romanticism, dry musical humor, and moments of public rhetoric alongside deeply personal statements—but that everything is handled with mastery and assurance. It’s easy to tell which composers Shostakovich most admired as a young man—there are passing references in particular to his fellow countrymen Prokofiev, Scriabin, Stravinsky, and Tchaikovsky—but the final, lasting image is of Shostakovich himself. It’s the same Shostakovich who appears

in photographs at the time—pokerfaced (with tongue in cheek?), intense, diffident, and—despite the reserve in his eyes, shaded by the spectacles that would be his mask for life—determined to succeed.

**T**he First Symphony begins as chamber music and ends with the kind of orchestral bombast we now know from the *Leningrad* and his other symphonies designed to address public issues. It has four thematically related movements, with the scherzo placed before the slow one, which leads without pause into the finale. A solo piano has a significant role in the symphony. (At the conservatory, Shostakovich had been undecided whether to concentrate on composition or piano; years later he said, “If the truth be told, I should have done both.”)

The distinctive quality of the first movement is its crystalline texture, delicate yet razor sharp. From the opening measures, where a solo bassoon converses with a single trumpet, individual instruments shine. Important ideas are often introduced simply, by one voice against a spare accompaniment. At the climax, Shostakovich unexpectedly throws a number of ideas together, to tremendous effect.

The scherzo is an early example of the composer’s humor, refined during his days as a pianist in local movie houses, when he often laughed so uncontrollably during his favorite scenes that he had to stop playing. This movement is filled with high spirits; the ghostly trio, with its persistent triangle and

snare drum rolls, is oddly mysterious. Still, before the movement is over, Shostakovich manages to combine these two elements into a thrilling climax.

The Lento begins with a plaintive oboe tune, distantly related to the main theme of the first movement, and continues in a richly lyrical vein—music that refutes all the later comments about Shostakovich’s lesser melodic talent. The finale, which brings together many previous themes,

is more intricate, with wide mood swings, abrupt tempo changes, bold contrasts (a full orchestral climax answered by a timpani solo, for example), and a general emotional complexity that is inevitable at any reunion. But most of all, it confirms the arrival on the music scene of an exciting and enduring new voice. ■

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

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## Sir Mark Elder

Conductor



Music director of the Hallé, Sir Mark Elder enjoys close associations with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and the Orchestra

of the Age of Enlightenment. He was music director of English National Opera from 1979 to 1993, and he has been principal guest conductor of the BBC and the City of Birmingham orchestras. He has appeared almost annually at the BBC Proms since his debut in 1975, including at the Last Night in 1987 and 2006.

Elder regularly conducts for many international opera companies, including the Royal Opera, Covent Garden; Metropolitan Opera in New York; the Paris Opera; the Lyric Opera of Chicago; and Glyndebourne Festival Opera, and he was the first British conductor to conduct a new production at the Bayreuth Festival. He also has worked with the world's major orchestras, including the Boston, Chicago, and London Symphony orchestras; the Berlin Philharmonic; the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra; and the Budapest Festival Orchestra.

Last November, Elder co-presented BBC Four's four-part series *Symphony*,

and this year, he was chair of the judging panel on BBC Two's *Maestro at the Opera*.

Sir Mark Elder was appointed CBE in 1989 and knighted in 2008. In 2006, he was named Conductor of the Year by the Royal Philharmonic Society. He received *Gramophone* awards for his recordings of Wagner's *Götterdämmerung* and of Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*, *The Kingdom*, and *Violin Concerto*.

Last year, Elder was appointed principal artist of the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment and awarded honorary membership in the Royal Philharmonic Society. He also became artistic director of Opera Rara, with which he is planning several recording projects over the next five years.

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**Mark Elder first appeared with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on subscription concerts at Orchestra Hall in May 1983, conducting Berlioz's *King Lear* Overture, Stravinsky's Concerto for Piano and Wind Instruments with John Browning, and Dvořák's Fifth Symphony. He most recently appeared on subscription concerts in January 2012, conducting Delius's *The Walk to the Paradise Garden* from *A Village Romeo and Juliet*, Elgar's *Falstaff*, Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Tale of the Invisible City of Kitezh*, and Tchaikovsky's *Romeo and Juliet*.**

## Alice Coote

Mezzo-soprano



Renowned on the major recital, concert, and opera stages of the world, Alice Coote is regarded as one of the great artists of today.

Coote performs in recital throughout the U.K., Europe, and the U.S. at Wigmore Hall, the BBC Proms, the Concertgebouw, and Lincoln Center and Carnegie Hall in New York, among other venues. Last season, she appeared at Wigmore Hall in a series of concerts featuring music by Mahler, Schubert's *Winterreise*, and arias by Handel in partnership with Julius Drake, the Nash Ensemble, and the English Concert.

Acclaimed for her performances of works by Mahler, Berlioz, Mozart, and Handel with such orchestras as the London Symphony Orchestra, Boston Symphony Orchestra, New York Philharmonic, Hallé, and Concertgebouw, Coote has collaborated with conductors including Valery Gergiev, Christoph von Dohnányi, Jiří Bělohávek, Mark Elder, and Pierre Boulez. She recently toured Europe in *La clemenza di Tito* with Louis Langrée and the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, sang Mahler's *Song of the Earth* with the Netherlands Philharmonic under Marc Albrecht, and appeared at the BBC Proms as an artist-in-residence.

Her operatic roles include Dejanira in *Hercules in Love*, Prince Charming

in *Cinderella*, Poppea, Carmen, Charlotte, Dorabella, Lucretia, Marguerite, Penelope, The Composer, Idamante, Nerone, Hansel, Sesto in *Giulio Cesare*, Sesto in *Tito*, Maffio Orsini, Ruggiero, and Ariodante. These she has performed at Opera North, Welsh National Opera, English National Opera, Glyndebourne, the Royal Opera House, Paris Opera, the Lyric Opera of Chicago, the Metropolitan Opera, and the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, as well as in Amsterdam, Munich, Frankfurt, Salzburg, Geneva, Seattle, Los Angeles, Toronto, and San Francisco.

This season's engagements include Mahler's Rückert lieder with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, *The Damnation of Faust* at the Salzburg Festival with John Eliot Gardiner, recitals in Frankfurt and Moscow, the title role of Donizetti's *La favorite* at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, and returns to the Metropolitan as Sesto in *Giulio Cesare* and to San Francisco for *The Tales of Hoffmann*. With pianist Graham Johnson, she will record an album of French songs for Hyperion.

Coote's discography includes an album of English songs, songs by Schumann and Mahler, Handel's *Messiah*, Mahler's Second Symphony, *The Dream of Gerontius*, *Ariadne on Naxos*, *Orfeo*, *Choice of Hercules*, and Brahms's Alto Rhapsody.

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**These performances mark Alice Coote's debut with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.**

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra is consistently hailed as one of the world's finest orchestras. In the 2012–13 season—the Orchestra's 122nd—Riccardo Muti continues his tenure as the CSO's tenth music director.

Throughout its history, the Chicago Symphony Orchestra has enjoyed leadership from an illustrious list of music directors, beginning with Theodore Thomas, who founded the Orchestra in 1891, followed by Frederick Stock, Désiré Defauw, Artur Rodzinski, Rafael Kubelík, Fritz Reiner, Jean Martinon, Sir Georg Solti, and Daniel Barenboim. From 2006 to 2010, Bernard Haitink led the Orchestra as principal conductor, the first in CSO history. Pierre Boulez, who was appointed principal guest conductor in 1995, has served as Helen Regenstein Conductor Emeritus since 2006.

The CSO performs well over 150 concerts each year at Symphony Center and at the Ravinia Festival, where it is in residence each summer. The ensemble has embarked on thirty-eight overseas tours since Georg Solti led the first overseas tour to Europe in 1971, visiting Italy and Russia in spring 2012. The CSO has traveled to Asia six times, as well as once each to Australia and South America. The Orchestra has traveled to Canada sixteen times and made its first trip to Mexico in October 2012.

Recording has been a significant part of the CSO's history since 1916, and in 2007, the Orchestra launched its own record label, CSO Resound. CSO recordings have earned sixty-two Grammy awards from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, most recently in 2011 for

Best Classical Album and Best Choral Performance for Verdi's Requiem conducted by Riccardo Muti.

In 2007, the CSO returned to the national airwaves with its self-produced weekly broadcast series, which is syndicated to more than three hundred markets nationwide on the WFMT Radio Network as well as on [cso.org](http://cso.org). The CSO also expanded its online presence with free video downloads of *Beyond the Score*.

The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Association is the parent organization for the Chicago Symphony Chorus; Civic Orchestra of Chicago; the *Symphony Center Presents* concert series; the Institute for Learning, Access and Training; and the Symphony Center facility. *Symphony Center Presents*, the organization's presentation arm, offers more than fifty diverse performances each year, including piano and chamber recitals, visiting orchestras, jazz, world music, and the MusicNOW contemporary series.

Mason Bates and Anna Clyne are the CSO's Mead Composers-in-Residence, taking up their posts with the 2010–11 season. They curate the MusicNOW series along with principal conductor Cliff Colnot and work with Maestro Muti to reach the Chicago community.

The Institute for Learning, Access and Training at the CSO, launched in October 2008, engages more than 150,000 Chicago-area residents annually. Under the auspices of the Institute, Yo-Yo Ma, who became the first Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant in January 2010, serves as an invaluable partner to Maestro Muti, by participating in the development of new initiatives and music series.

**Pierre Boulez** Helen Regenstein Conductor Emeritus  
**Yo-Yo Ma** Judson and Joyce Green Creative Consultant  
**Duain Wolfe** Chorus Director  
**Mason Bates, Anna Clyne** Mead Composers-in-Residence

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 Li-Kuo Chang  
 Assistant Principal  
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 John Bartholomew  
 Catherine Brubaker  
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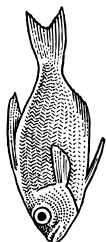
\*Assistant concertmasters are listed by seniority.

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