

18.1.

WEDNESDAY SERIES 8

Helsinki Music Centre at 19.00

Hannu Lintu, conductor

Frank Peter Zimmermann, violin

Pyotr Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake, suite Op. 20a 31 min
I Scène
II Valse
III Danse des cygnes
IV Scène
V Czardas: Danse hongroise
VI Scène Finale

Magnus Lindberg: Violin Concerto No. 2, fpF 25 min
I
II
III

INTERVAL 20 min

Igor Stravinsky: Le baiser de la fée (The Fairy's Kiss) 44 min
Prologue: The Lullaby in the Storm
A Village Fête
By the Mill – Pas de deux – Scene
Epilogue: Berceuse of the Eternal Dwellings

Interval at about 20.00 The concert ends at about 21.25.
Broadcast live on Yle Teema, Yle Radio 1 and online at yle.fi/rso.

PYOTR TCHAIKOVSKY (1840–1893): SWAN LAKE, SUITE

The first full-length ballet composed by Pyotr Tchaikovsky was not a great success when it was first performed, at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, in 1877. The main reason was the poor choreography, though Tchaikovsky also blamed himself. Yet only two years after his death, *Swan Lake* really began to take off on the wings of the classic choreography by Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov. Tchaikovsky had himself planned to put together a suite of music from the ballet, but the task remained for others to do. The suite does not follow the plot of the ballet, but this is no obstacle to understanding the music.

The six-movement suite, Op. 20a, begins with the *Scène* from Act II, the swans on their enchanted lake. The wistful oboe melody against a background of tremolo strings hints at its ominous secret when transferred to the French horns and its passion to the strings. The great waltz medley from Act I has all the glitter of a fairytale palace and the refinement of royal revels.

The famous *Danse des cygnes* from Act II is a true test of coordination for the *corps de ballet*. With its bassoon accompaniment, it possibly bears a reminder of their captive fate.

The *Scène* from Act II strikes to the very heart of the matter: nothing can prevent Siegfried and Odette from falling in love. Tchaikovsky endows his two soloists with individuality and delicate grace: the harp creates an amorous magic circle as the violin prima donna

floats by, watched over by a cello.

The Hungarian *Czardas* is from Act III, the ball at which the various bridal candidates are presented to Prince Siegfried. The spirited dance, evocative of the Hungarian steppes, gets gradually wilder and wilder.

The closing *Scène* from Act IV returns after a melodramatic twist to the theme heard at the beginning of the suite. The swans now sing their hearts out before settling in the final bars.

MAGNUS LINDBERG (B. 1958) VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 2

The first Violin Concerto by Magnus Lindberg (2006), dedicated to Lisa Batiashvili, was scored for a chamber orchestra. The second (2016) is dedicated to Frank Peter Zimmermann and was commissioned jointly by the London, Berlin and New York Philharmonic Orchestras and the Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra.

In both Concertos, Lindberg operates with a traditional battery of wind instruments, but in the second he draws extra harmonic force from four French horns, three trombones and a wider selection of percussions. The second is also bigger than the first in its gestures and drama. It consists of three unnamed movements performed without

a break during which the music grows and spirals up and up. Time and again it opens out into vast harmonic panoramas, only to press on to more and more new planes.

Soloist and orchestra share the thematic work in a way that ensures the violin's voice will be heard. In this respect, the Concerto has points in common with Luciano Berio's *Points on the curve to find...* (1971), in which the orchestra takes its material from the soloist. This principle is established right at the beginning; the soloist presents a motif rising in flaming double stops that immediately transfers to the orchestra and acquires different colour as it passes from one instrument to another. The first section concentrates on a rising gesture. While unleashing a blaze of spectral colour high in the solo violin and orchestra, it also underlines their thematic integration, their active collaboration.

The second section is more intimate in mood, though not much slower. Amid bass-drum beats and chorale-like figures on the brass, the violin adopts a new, more individual and virtuosic role.

Shortly before the section begins, the soloist presents a flourishing motif, a variation that bursts into flower half way through the section with almost movie-like passion. It is an example of Lindberg's unbridled feel for life, the heat of which also extends to the solo cadenza at the end of the section. This cadenza represents the very essence of the personal contribution of Frank Peter Zimmermann, joined in places by the orchestra and its leader.

The closing section is most blatantly virtuosic; the solo line and the bubbling, sizzling orchestra are bound tightly together in their unceasing onward drive. Lindberg recaps his motifs almost in the conventional manner, culminating in the magnificent closing bars, their dark undercurrent carrying a hint of Baroque solemnity and enigma.

IGOR STRAVINSKY (1882–1971): *THE FAIRY'S KISS*

The Fairy's Kiss (Le baiser da la fée) is the softest and most fairytale-like of the Stravinsky ballets, but one full of humorous touches. Its premiere, by Ida Rubinstein's ballet company, with its touristy Swiss stage designs was not a success, which maybe explains why it did not catch on. Stravinsky later (1934, 1949) arranged a four-movement *Divertimento* of the music for concert use.

The beginning was, for a Russian composer who had lost his homeland in the Revolution, allegorical: mother and child are separated by a fairy's kiss, spiriting him away to a realm beyond time and place. Familiarity with the plot is here neither necessary nor even very useful. In the Prologue, mother and child are caught up in a storm, a fairy finds the boy, kisses him, and leaves him to be raised by the inhabitants of a country village.

By the second scene, the boy has grown up and is celebrating his engage-

ment, dancing with the villagers and his fiancée. The brawny brass, breezy rhythms and babbling solo woodwinds present a rustic scene in heartier tones than Tchaikovsky's. In the latter half of the scene, the fairy, disguised as a gypsy fortune-teller, foretells a wondrous future for the boy in tones shrouded in mystery.

By the Mill is an idyllic tableau setting the scene for the ballet's main *Pas de deux*, in which the young lad thinks he is dancing with his beloved but his partner is in fact the fairy. In the variations, soloists from the orchestra take part in the amorous billing-and-cooing, and the coda jokingly parodies Tchaikovsky's showy exits.

The establishment and confusion of identities is the chief item for inspection in *The Fairy's Kiss*, and it is no coincidence that Stravinsky gave this *Pas de deux* his most graceful music.

In the Epilogue, Stravinsky borrows from Tchaikovsky's song *None but the Lonely Heart* (clarinet, Goethe: *Nur wer die Sehnsucht*). As the fairy kisses the young man again and locks him for ever in its fairytale world, Stravinsky gently and sadly says goodbye to Tchaikovsky. The ideal world created by the music may be a beautiful illusion, but the border between it and reality is gossamer thin.

Programme notes by **Antti Häyrynen** translated (abridged) by **Susan Sinisalo**

HANNU LINTU

Chief Conductor of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra since August 2013, Hannu Lintu previously held the positions of Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra, Principal Guest Conductor with the RTÉ National Symphony Orchestra and Artistic Director of the Helsingborg Symphony and Turku Philharmonic orchestras.

Highlights of Lintu's 2016/17 season include appearances with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Staatsorchester Stuttgart, Radio-Symphonieorchester Wien, Luzerner Sinfonieorchester and Orquesta Sinfónica de Galicia, and in North America with the St Louis Symphony and the Toronto Symphony, Baltimore Symphony and Detroit Symphony orchestras. Recent engagements have included the The Cleveland and Gulbenkian orchestras, the Orchestre de Chambre de Lausanne, Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi, and the BBC Scottish Symphony, Iceland Symphony and Seoul Philharmonic orchestras. In 2015 he conducted a complete cycle of Sibelius' symphonies in Tokyo with the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra and the New Japan Philharmonic, and toured Austria in January 2016 with violinist Leila Josefowicz and the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra.

Lintu returns to Savonlinna Opera Festival in July 2017 to conduct Aulis Sallinen's *Kullervo*, and in May 2017 he conducts Sibelius' *Kullervo* in a special project with Finnish National Opera and

Ballet with director and choreographer Tero Saarinen. Previous productions with Finnish National Opera have included Parsifal, Carmen, Sallinen's King Lear, and Wagner's Tristan und Isolde in spring 2016. Lintu has also worked with Tampere Opera and Estonian National Opera.

Hannu Lintu has made several re-recordings for Ondine, Naxos, Avie and Hyperion. His recording of Prokofiev Piano Concertos with Olli Mustonen and the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra was released in September 2016, while other recent releases include recordings of Mahler's Symphony No. 1, a selection of works by Magnus Lindberg, and Messiaen's Turangalila Symphony with Angela Hewitt and Valerie Hartmann-Claverie. Lintu has received several accolades for his recordings, including a 2011 Grammy nomination for Best Opera CD plus Gramophone Award nominations for his recordings of Enescu's Symphony No.2 with the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra and the Violin Concertos of Sibelius and Thomas Adès with Augustin Hadelich and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

Hannu Lintu studied cello and piano at the Sibelius Academy, where he later studied conducting with Jorma Panula. He participated in masterclasses with Myung-Whun Chung at the Accademia Chigiana in Siena, Italy, and took first prize at the Nordic Conducting Competition in Bergen in 1994.

FRANK PETER ZIMMERMANN

Frank Peter Zimmermann premiered the second Violin Concerto by Magnus Lindberg in December 2015, with the London Philharmonic Orchestra under Jaap van Zweden, and has since performed it again with orchestras including the Berlin and New York Philharmonics and the Swedish Radio Symphony. He has also premiered the Violin Concertos by Matthias Pintscher, Brett Dean and Augusta Read Thomas.

Born in Duisburg, Germany, Frank Peter Zimmermann made his first solo appearance with an orchestra when he was only ten and went on to become a soloist with leading orchestras and a highly-acclaimed chamber musician. He has been the recipient of many prizes and distinctions, among them the Bundesverdienstkreuz of the German Federal Republic and the Paul Hindemith Prize of the City of Hanau.

Frank Peter Zimmermann is the leader of the Trio Zimmermann, with Antoine Tamestit (viola) and Christian Poltéra (cello). The Trio has released award-winning discs of String Trios by Beethoven, Mozart and Schubert. In December the Trio made a tour of Europe taking in Zurich, Warsaw, Amsterdam, Milan and other cities. During the present season Zimmermann will also be the soloist with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Berlin and New York Philharmonics, the Vienna Symphony and the French National Orchestra.

Zimmermann has recorded almost all the Violin Concertos in the standard

violin repertoire, from Bach to Ligeti. In 2015 and 2016, hänssler CLASSIC released discs of the five Mozart Violin Concertos and *Sinfonia concertante*. He has recorded Dvořák's Concerto for Decca and Hindemith's for BIS.

THE FINNISH RADIO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

The Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra (FRSO) is the orchestra of the Finnish Broadcasting Company (Yle). Its mission is to produce and promote Finnish musical culture and its Chief Conductor as of autumn 2013 has been Hannu Lintu. The FRSO has two Honorary Conductors: Jukka-Pekka Saraste and Sakari Oramo.

The Radio Orchestra of ten players founded in 1927 grew to symphony orchestra strength in the 1960s. Hannu Lintu was preceded as Chief Conductor by Toivo Haapanen, Nils-Eric Fougstedt, Paavo Berglund, Okko Kamu, Leif Segerstam, Jukka-Pekka Saraste and Sakari Oramo.

In addition to the great Classical-Romantic masterpieces, the latest contemporary music is a major item in the repertoire of the FRSO, which each year premieres a number of Yle commissions. Another of the orchestra's tasks is to record all Finnish orchestral music for the Yle archive.

uring the 2016/2017 season the FRSO will premiere five Finnish works commissioned by Yle and feature such pioneers of Finnish Modernism as Väinö

Raitio and Uuno Klami. The programme will also include orchestral works by Stravinsky, symphonies by Mahler and Bruckner, Haydn's The Seasons oratorio and concertos by contemporary composers. Among its guest artists will be soprano Karita Mattila and mezzo-soprano Michelle DeYoung, conductors Esa-Pekka Salonen, Teodor Currentzis and Gustavo Gimeno, and pianist Daniil Trifonov.

The FRSO has recorded works by Mahler, Ligeti, Sibelius, Hakola, Lindberg, Saariaho, Sallinen, Kaipainen, Kokkonen and others, and the debut disc of the opera *Aslak Hetta* by Armas Launis. Its discs have reaped some prestigious distinctions, such as the BBC Music Magazine Award, the Académie Charles Cros Award and a MIDEM Classical Award. The disc of Sibelius's Lemminkäinen and Pohjola's Daughter was Gramophone magazine's Critic's Choice in December 2015 and brought the FRSO and Hannu Lintu a Finnish Emma award in the Classical Album category. Music by Sibelius, Prokofiev and Fagerlund will be among the repertoire recorded during the 2016/2017 season.

The FRSO regularly tours to all parts of the world. During the 2016/2017 season its schedule will include a tour in Finland, taking in concerts conducted by Hannu Lintu in Suomussalmi, Kajaani, Mikkeli and Kuopio.

The home channel of the FRSO is Yle Radio 1, which broadcasts all its concerts, usually live, both in Finland and abroad. Its concerts can also be heard and watched with excellent live stream quality on the FRSO website (www.yle.fi/rso), and the majority of them are televised live on the Yle Teema channel.