

BRUSSELS PHILHARMONIC

EN

THE UNFINISHED



unfinished, clouded in mystery, powerful

WED
12.10

BRUSSELS PHILHARMONIC PRESENTS A BUCKET LIST CONCERT
CONDUCTOR **ANDRIS POGA** CONCERTMASTER **HENRY RAUDALES**
FRANZ SCHUBERT SINFONIE NR. 7 H-MOLL D.759
"UNVOLLENDETE" **LUCIANO BERIO** RENDERING

FLAGEY
BRUSSELS

PROGRAMME

Brussels Philharmonic · Andris Poga, conductor
Opening Concert Schubert Days Flagey

Franz Schubert

Symphony No. 7 in B minor D. 759 “Unvollendete” (1822)

I. Allegro moderato

II. Andante con moto

Luciano Berio

Rendering (1990)

I. Allegro

II. Andante

III. Scherzo

MUSICIANS BRUSSELS PHILHARMONIC

conductor
Andris Poga

Concertmaster
Henry Raudales

Violin 1
Bart Lemmens ⁽²⁾, **Camille Aubrée**,
Sylvie Bagara, **Sarah Bayens**,
Olivia Bergeot, **Annelies Broeckhoven**,
Stefan Claeys, **Cristina Constantinescu**,
Justine Rigutto, **Kristina Rimkeviciute**,
Elizaveta Rybentseva, **Anton Skakun**,
Alissa Vaitsner

Violin 2
Samuel Nemtanu ⁽¹⁾,
Véronique Burstin, **Dante Cáceres**,
Caroline Chardonnet, **Alexis Delporte**,
Francisco Dourthé Orrego,
Aline Janeczek, **Mireille Kovac**,
Eléonore Malaboeuf, **Sayoko Mundy**,
Eline Pauwels, **Julien Poli**

Viola
Mihai Cocea ⁽¹⁾, **Griet François** ⁽²⁾,
Philippe Allard, **José-Miguel Freitas**,
Phung Ha, **Hélène Koerver**,
Agnieszka Kosakowska,
Barbara Peynsaert, **Stephan Uelpenich**,
Patricia Van Reusel

Cello
Karel Steylaerts ⁽¹⁾, **Kirsten Andersen**,
Barbara Gerarts, **Julius Himmler**,
Sylvain Ruffier, **Emmanuel Tondus**,
Inés Iglesias Walch, **Elke Wynants**

Double Bass
Jan Buysschaert ⁽¹⁾
Nassim Attar, **Ben Faes**,
Thomas Fiorini, **Simon Luce**,
Luzia Vieira

Flute
Caroline Simon ⁽¹⁾
Sarah Miller

Oboe
Balder Dendievel
Maarten Wijnen

Clarinet
Maura Marinucci ⁽¹⁾
Alba Mayorga Rodrigo

Bassoon
Karsten Przybyl ⁽¹⁾
Jonas Coomans ⁽²⁾

Horn
Anthony Devriendt ⁽¹⁾
Luc van den Hove

Trumpet
Serge Rigauumont ⁽¹⁾
Rik Ghesquière

Trombone
David Rey ⁽¹⁾
Sander Vets
Tim Van Medegael ⁽²⁾

Tuba
Jean Xhonneux ⁽²⁾

Timpani
Gert François ⁽¹⁾

Celesta
Anastasia Goldberg

⁽¹⁾ principal

⁽²⁾ soloist

WELCOME

Franz Schubert's Unfinished Symphony: unfinished, clouded in mystery, but also powerful and deeply romantic. The iconic conductor Nikolaus Harnoncourt described Schubert's Unfinished Symphony as a piece with the "strangeness, surprise and shock of a stone that falls from the moon." The work was absolutely innovative, but at the same time reflects the zeitgeist in which it was written: melodic, romantic, bursting with emotion and feelings.

For the 150th anniversary of the death of Schubert in 1978, the fragmentary remnants of Schubert's other unfinished symphony, the Tenth Symphony in D major which he was working on just before his death, came to the attention of the Italian composer Luciano Berio (1925-2003). He finished the symphony, not by trying to complete it in 'the style of', but by restoring it, as one would an ancient fresco. He kept the existing fragments intact, and filled the gaps with new music that does not make up for the missing parts but instead, connects them to each other. "In the empty spaces I composed a kind of connective tissue which is constantly different and changing, always 'pianissimo' and 'distant', intermingled with reminiscences of late Schubert." Like a musical 'cement' that binds the stones of a house to each other."

PROGRAMME NOTES

When Franz Schubert (1797-1828) died (in 1828), he left behind not only an enormous repertoire, but also countless sketches and notes for works left incomplete. On the occasion of the 150th anniversary of his death, in 1978, these sketches were compared and organized once again. In particular, the unfinished Symphony No. 7 in B Minor, D.759 drew people's attention: countless composers and music theorists have tried since then to finish the symphony. The most remarkable endeavour to do so was by made the Chinese IT firm Huawei in 2019. Based on an analysis of the tone, colour and melodic material of the first two movements, and with the aid of the artificial intelligence in one of its smartphones, the company simulated a continuation of the symphony. The result was, in turn, revised and further developed by the film music composer Lucas Cantor. Whether the end result truly brings Schubert back to life may be called into question, but the experiment does point to the timelessness and quality of the original work.

What the Italian composer Luciano Berio (1925-2003) did with Schubert's - likewise incomplete - Tenth Symphony in D Major is of an entirely different order. Berio is known among other things for his distinctive orchestrations and transformations of both his own music and that of

other composers, ranging from Monteverdi to Mahler. His aim was not to reconstruct the Tenth Symphony as Schubert himself might have written it. Instead, in his Rendering for Orchestra, he created a unique fresco in which newly composed music serves as the plaster to bind together the surviving fragments of Schubert's music.

AN OPEN END

The Austrian composer Franz Schubert was born in Vienna, a city where music was flourishing under composers such as Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. And although during his short life, he gained little renown, Schubert can certainly be considered just as ground-breaking. By the time Beethoven had published his First Symphony at the age of thirty, Schubert had already completed nearly his entire oeuvre. He had the reputation of being a hard worker and to write a lot in a short period of time; thus, by the age of twenty, he had already composed six operas, five symphonies, around ten string quartets and several hundred songs (Lieder).

Schubert earned his reputation chiefly with his Lieder - in the course of his lifetime he wrote some six hundred in all. The introverted Schubert found inspiration and an example in the sensitive verses of poets like Goethe, Schiller and Heine; he was a master in translating the emotional content of their poems into music. In addition to the Lied genre, Schubert

also focused on instrumental music, especially towards the end of his life. He composed thirteen symphonies in all, of which about half remained unfinished. None of those symphonies was performed in his lifetime, and it was only many years after his death that they were published. This has made for a complicated chronology and numbering. Thus, Schubert's Symphony in C Major (D.944), known as "the Great", was assigned number 9 at the end of the 19th century, because it was presumed that a seventh symphony had been lost. When it appeared that this was not the case, and that Schubert had thus left only eight completed symphonies, this numbering was nevertheless maintained.

The seventh – or eighth in the traditional numbering – symphony was dubbed "the Unfinished", since Schubert had only completed two of its movements. Of the third, only a few sketches survive, which are clearly of lesser quality than the first two. This is seen as an indication that Schubert was planning to make it a symphony of four movements. Why he abandoned that plan may never be known. What is evident is that the symphony, even unfinished, is a unique masterpiece. In addition to its three–four time signature of both movements, and the unusual key of B minor, the symphony is also unusual for the gripping opening: from the quiet lower strings rises a plaintive theme, which is then slowly built up. The second movement

is also enveloped in a similarly mournful and consoling mood.

UNIQUE MASTERPIECE

The Unfinished Symphony is no isolated case. Schubert spent those years fully immersed in experimentation with new forms of expression, which regularly presented him with problems regarding the symphonic form. Only in 1825–1826 did he find a solution, when writing his Ninth Symphony. He had also started working on a tenth, but if that work we have only a few sketches. Berio went to work with those fragmentary remnants in 1989: "During the last several years, I have been asked time and again to do 'something' with Schubert, but I always declined this kind but cumbersome invitation. Until I received a copy of the sketches that the 31-year-old Franz had been accumulating during the final weeks of his life in preparation for a Tenth Symphony in D Major. These sketches are fairly complex and of great beauty: they shed new light on the new paths that were taking Schubert away from Beethoven's influence. Seduced by those sketches, I decided to restore them; restore, not complete nor reconstruct."

Berio left the surviving fragments of an orchestral work of three movements almost entirely intact – at most, he restored them. The gaps he filled with new music that bind the existing fragments to each other as a sort of musical plaster. He

described the process as follows: "In the empty spaces, between one sketch and the next, I composed a kind of connective tissue which is always different and changing, always pianissimo and 'distant', intermingled with reminiscences of late Schubert (the Piano Sonata in B-Flat, etc.), and crossed by material based on fragments of the same sketches."

Rendering sounds both 'Schubertian' and yet incontrovertibly from Berio's hand, with colour effects in the form of grace notes, glissandi, tremolos and countless modern sound effects. The complex polyrhythms and passages with a full chromatic scale in the brass section – that would have been impossible to play on the natural trumpets and horns of Schubert's day – give an indication of Berio's personal contribution. Berio was aware of these anachronisms, and therefore placed the original piano sketches underneath the orchestral score by way of justification. This way, Schubert remains present in every layer of the work.

Commentary by Aurélie Walschaert*

* the section on Rendering by Luciano Berio has been reworked on the basis of a text by Kathleen Snyers

ANDRIS POGA, CONDUCTOR

www.andrispoga.com

Andris Poga is the Chief Conductor of the Stavanger Symphony Orchestra since the 2021/2022 season. He was the Music Director of the Latvian National Symphony Orchestra (LNSO) from 2013 till 2021 and will continue to collaborate with the LNSO as its Artistic Advisor.

Highlights of recent years have included concerts with the leading orchestras of Germany, France, Italy, Japan and Scandinavia. After the first successful collaborations he has been invited back to the NDR Elbphilharmonie Orchester Hamburg, Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, Gewandhausorchester Leipzig, SWR Symphony Stuttgart, NHK Symphony Orchestra Tokyo and many others. He has also conducted the Wiener Symphoniker, Saint Petersburg Philharmonic, Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Orchestre National de France, Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Sydney Symphony.

In 2010, Andris Poga was the First Prize winner of the Evgeny Svetlanov International Conducting Competition, which thrust him into the international scene. He was an assistant to Paavo Järvi at the Orchestre de Paris from 2011 to 2014, and from 2012 to 2014 he served as an assistant conductor for the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

Andris has graduated the conducting

department of the Jazeps Vitolis Latvian Academy of Music. He also studied philosophy at the University of Latvia and conducting at the Vienna University of Music and Performing Arts.

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“The world needs symphonic music. And symphonic music needs the world.”

That is the firm belief of the Brussels Philharmonic. As a symphony orchestra founded in 1935 under the auspices of the Belgian public broadcaster, unveiling the symphonic world as best we can is deep in our DNA. By innovating while maintaining full respect for the value of the past, we keep the symphonic music of the past, present and future relevant and inspiring – for ourselves and all of society. We do this from the historic Studio 4 at Flagey in Brussels, together with our music director Kazushi Ono: he shares our open and adventurous spirit and our rock-solid belief in the need for cross-fertilization between art, life and society.

With our activities firmly based in our home city of Brussels, the Brussels Philharmonic focuses resolutely on 4 areas, each of which is intended to bring people together around symphonic music:

> Brussels Philharmonic Bucket List: our own distinctive selection of the

great symphonic repertoire, with works that we think you must hear live in a concert hall at least once in your life.

> Brussels Philharmonic Atelier: back to the source of symphonic music, the art of playing music in a smaller formation. We work carefully and in depth, with extra attention to delicate details.

> Brussels Philharmonic Lab: a place where contemporary music is given the leading role, researched and tested, and exposed to other arts or forms of performance. A radical decision to experiment and focus on the future, with guest conductor Ilan Volkov.

> film & festival: as a former broadcast orchestra, the Brussels Philharmonic has a deeply rooted love of film music. And we love to share our enthusiasm, knowledge and expertise with partners and festivals.

In, around and throughout the many concerts we offer, the golden thread is the theme of EXPLORE: a wide range of diverse, joined-up initiatives that invite audiences to discover, explore in greater depth, admire, share, and connect. By means of meetings, podcasts, chamber music, guided walks, educational materials and workshops, discussions after concerts, customized introductions, digital initiatives and much more, the Brussels Philharmonic comes to you. Thanks to the youth orchestra programme, young musicians also receive the opportunity to get down to work themselves: from

an amateur level at BOENK! Brussels Young Philharmonic (BOENK!) to the pre-professional at the Youth Orchestra Flanders.

The vision of our music director, Kazushi Ono, an experienced conductor whose reputation crosses continents, cultures and genres, overlaps in so many ways with that of the orchestra: the authenticity with which the great repertoire is kept alive, the permanent quest for innovation and evolution, the commitment to giving the music of today and tomorrow a central role, and the passion for sharing the love of symphonic music widely and generously.

That sharing takes place first and foremost in our home port at Flagey, where the orchestra rehearses, performs and throws open the doors to its activities, as well as on the major stages and at festivals in Flanders. The orchestra's international reputation comes to the fore in its specialisation in recording soundtracks (including the Oscar-winning music for 'The Artist'), the many successful recordings for labels such as Deutsche Grammophon, and the ambitious projects on prestigious stages around the world (Carnegie Hall, New York, Philharmonie de Paris, Musikverein Wien, Grosses Festspielhaus Salzburg, Cadogan Hall, London).

Brussels Philharmonic is an institution of the Flemish Community.

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