

# **SUNDAY 3 MARCH 2019**

## **PROGRAMME for MUSIC AROUND STORIES**

**Aram Khachaturian (1903-1978)**

**Trio 1932**

***Andante con dolore***

***Allegro***

***Moderato-***

***Prestissimo-Moderato***

Khachaturian was born to an Armenian family in Tbilisi, Georgia. He had no formal musical training as a child, but was deeply immersed in the folk music traditions of the Caucasus. At 18 he went to Moscow to study first medicine, and then music. This trio dates from 1932, when he was still studying at the Conservatoire, and greatly impressed Prokofiev, who arranged for both performance and publication. The folk influence is prevalent throughout, and the finale is a set of variations on a traditional Uzbek theme. Both outer movements have a dreamy fairy-tale mood, with the wildest music at the heart of the central movement, exactly reversing the classical tradition.

Khachaturian's music has proved as popular with film makers as with audiences, featuring in *Space Odyssey*, *Spartacus*, *Ice Age: The Meltdown*, and in the BBC series *The Onedin Line*.

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)**

**from ‘The Seasons’ for piano**

***Mesni Zhavoronka -Song of the Lark (March)***

***Podsnezhnik The Snowdrop (April)***

In 1875, shortly after the premiere of the first piano concerto, and while Tchaikovsky was putting the final touches to *Swan Lake*, he accepted a commission to write a short piano piece for every month's edition of the St. Petersburg music magazine *Novelist* for the following year.

The title, and a short poem -in which snowdrops are likened to the final tears of sadness, and the first of joy- were chosen by the editor. The lark in March does sound rather sad, so in comparison the snowdrop is definitely lighter in mood. Snowdrops here rarely last into April, but not only is the climate colder in Russia, but the Gregorian calendar was not adopted there until after the revolution of 1917, so their dates were 2 weeks ahead of ours!

**Darius Milhaud**  
**clarinette et piano**

**Suite pour violon,**

**(1892 - 1974)**  
**-Divertissement –**

## ***Ouverture***

### ***Jeu - Introduction et Final***

The trio is taken from the incidental music Milhaud wrote for Anouilh's play *Le Voyageur sans Bagages* (*Traveller with no Luggage* - 1937). The plot (based on a real-life incident) concerns a soldier returning from WWI with amnesia, and claimed by a number of different families. A wealthy family take him in as their lost one, but he finds this character to be thoroughly unpleasant, so opts instead for a young Englishman who needs to find a missing relative in order to qualify for a legacy. The play is thus both a comedy, and a disturbing speculation about the nature of one's identity. It is unclear in the play whether he actually goes with the Englishman or is fantasising, and this perhaps accounts for the jolly but inconclusive finale.

Milhaud's musical interests were wide, including Jazz and Latin American influences. When WW2 and his Jewish background forced him to emigrate to the USA and a teaching job in California, his students included Dave Brubeck (who named his son Darius) and Bert Bacharach.

**SHORT INTERVAL (refreshments will be served after the performance)**

**Igor Stravinsky**  
***Russian Dance***

**from Petrouchka:**

**(1882-1971)**  
**Rubinstein)**

**(arr. by the composer for Arthur**

Following the huge success of *The Firebird* in 1910, Sergei Diaghilev commissioned *Petrouchka* for the following season of his *Ballets Russes*. The puppet *Petrouchka* (nickname for "Peter", also meaning "parsley") is the Russian equivalent of Mr. Punch. At a show in a Shrovetide fair, three puppets are brought to life by a charlatan, which marks the beginning of a story that will soon take a dramatic turn.

(p.t.o)

*Russian Dance* is based on two traditional tunes, as well as incorporating a squeazy accordion effect. Interestingly, it seems that this lively music for Christian Carnival was originally planned to depict the selection of a sacrificial victim in primitive spring fertility rites for his third Diaghilev ballet *Le Sacre de Printemps*, which was to cause a riot at its premiere in 1913.

**Sergei Sergeyevich Prokofiev**  
**Romeo and Juliet**  
**(1891-1953)**  
**Prorvich)**

**Four Scenes from**  
**(arr. Bronislav**

**1/ Juliet as a Young Girl**, showing a skittish and a serious side to her character.

**2/ Masques** Romeo meets Juliet at a masked ball .

**3/ Dance of the Knights** The young bucks of the opposing Montagues and Capulets strut threateningly.

**4/ Mercutio** Romeo's friend, dashing and mercurial.

Prokofiev was born in Sontsovka , Ukraine, and showed early signs of talent , writing his first opera by the age of 9. At the instigation of Glazunov, who was much impressed with his music, he entered the Petersburg Academy in 1904 , though he was somewhat critical of the course. In 1914 he graduated from the Academy with flying colours, having won the piano prize with a performance of his own first concerto. A commission from Diaghilev soon followed , but then came revolution and he left for the USA in 1918. *Romeo & Juliet* (at first declared undanceable!) dates from 1935, when at last he returned to Russia. Clarinetist Prorvich was born in Babruysk (100km SE of Minsk) in 1930 and joined the orchestra of the Bolshoi Theatre around 1953.

**Igor Stravinsky (1882 - 1971)**  
**Tale (1918)**

**Suite from The Soldier's**

arr. by the composer

***March - The Soldier's Violin - Little Concert -***  
***Tango/Waltz/Rag - Devil's Dance***

During WWI and the Russian revolution Stravinsky lived in Switzerland, safe from the fighting, but cut off from much of his income (since Russia did not join the Berne copyright convention until 1955). Industrialist (and clarinetist) Werner Reinhart came to his aid to sponsor *L'Histoire du Soldat*, in which Stravinsky made some radical changes: Gone the lavish orchestration, gone the Russian tunes, supplanted by Western dance and march forms, albeit with wildly distorted rhythms - the soldier marches out-of-step, and the tango partners seem at loggerheads!

The soldier trudging home is waylaid by the devil, disguised as an old man, who persuades him to exchange his fiddle for a magic book. This gains him great wealth, but his 3-day march home has actually taken 3 years, and his family & fiancé shun him, thinking him a ghost. He turns the table on the devil by playing him at cards and losing to him all he has gained from the book-but he reclaims his violin. With his playing of three dances (Tango/Waltz/Rag) he cures a cataleptic princess, and she becomes his wife. The devil, full of anger, dances himself to death. This ends the Suite.

But the soldier's victory was conditional on his staying in the kingdom- which he leaves to visit his dying mother- so the devil wins his soul in the end.

**Jayne Maria Lodge, violin**

studied with Denis East at Trinity College of music. In her last year of study her quartet was awarded 1st prize in the chamber music competition. Jayne has worked as a freelance orchestral instrumentalist and has performed in chamber music concerts with such renowned musicians as Gerald Robbins and Haroutune Bedelian. She enjoys teaching children of all ages!

**Alistair Logan, clarinet**

graduated in mathematics at Cambridge before taking up a musical career. He studied clarinet with Herbert New and with Jack McCaw. He was a Sponsored Artist with East Midland Arts for four years and in addition to solo work and chamber music has appeared with most of the country's leading orchestras.

**Gisela Meyer, piano**

studied piano and cello in Germany and obtained a MMus in Accompaniment at the GSMD in London. She now studies singing privately with Jessica Cash.

Gisela is tutor for Chamber Ensembles, Piano and Singing at the City Lit and also teaches privately. She works as a freelance pianist, accompanist and singer and performs regularly in concerts in ensembles and as a soloist. Please visit: [giselameyer.me.uk](http://giselameyer.me.uk) for more information, and to sign up for concert notifications.