

Mozart & Bruckner

Friday, September 28 – 7:30 pm

Saturday, September 29 – 8 pm

Alexander Prior, conductor

James Campbell, clarinet

Afterthoughts, Friday post-performance, Main Lobby with Alexander Prior & James Campbell

Symphony Prelude, Saturday 7 pm, Upper Circle (Third Level) Lobby with D.T. Baker

LIZÉE

Zeiss After Dark

(3')*

MOZART

Clarinet Concerto in A Major, K.622

(29')*

Allegro

Adagio

Rondo: Allegro

INTERMISSION (20 minutes)

BRUCKNER

Symphony No. 9 in D minor

(83')*

(completion by Samale/Phillips/Cohrs/Mazzuca)

Feierlich: Misterioso

Scherzo: Bewegt, lebhaft

Adagio: Langsam, feierlich

Finale: Misterioso, nicht schnell

program subject to change

*indicates approximate performance duration

Zeiss After Dark

Nicole Lizée

(b. Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan, 1973)

First performed: February 23, 2017 in Ottawa

This is the ESO premiere of any work by Nicole Lizée

Nicole Lizée received her Masters of Music from Montréal's McGill University in 2001. Her eclectic oeuvre is informed by her fascination with everything from orchestras to karaoke tapes. She has composed for unusual instrumental combinations which have included, among other oddities, the Atari 2600 game console, and she is fascinated by the glitches made by outmoded and well-worn technology. She was awarded the 2017 SOCAN Jan V. Matejcek Award, as well as the 2013 Canada Council Jules Léger Prize.

Of her work *Zeiss After Dark*, the composer writes:

Stanley Kubrick and cinematographer John Alcott filmed the unprecedented “candlelight scene” in *Barry Lyndon* using 3-wick candles as the only light source. The resulting scene was unlike any other in cinema history for its look - gauzy and akin to a moving oil painting. The creativity and technical ingenuity required to capture this decidedly organic effect was considerable. Cameras with custom mounted Zeiss lenses designed for NASA were Kubrick’s solution to an almost insurmountable problem of light.

In writing this piece I imaged a sonic equivalent - a musical work that brings sound into focus through techniques that emulate the conditions involved in ultra lowlight - glow, flicker, bokeh - reimagined for orchestra.

Clarinet Concerto in A Major, K.622

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

(b. Salzburg, 1756 / d. Vienna, 1791)

First performed: October 16, 1791 in Prague

Last ESO performance: January 2014

As Brahms would late in life, Mozart was inspired by a clarinetist to write some of his most memorable later works. Anton Stadler was already a member of the Vienna court orchestra by the time Mozart arrived in Vienna in 1781. Not just a fine player, Stadler also designed and built more progressive instruments, and the works Mozart wrote for him took advantage of his innovations. Mozart’s *Clarinet Concerto* (the last concerto Mozart would write) was originally written for a basset clarinet, but Mozart modified his score for performances with a standard clarinet as well.

The first movement is dominated by a contented bucolic nature. It begins traditionally enough, with an orchestral introduction of the movement’s main material. But when the clarinet enters to do the same, it already presents a daunting series of runs and leaps – dominating the movement from there, and presenting a diverse range of virtuosity and even mood. The glorious slow movement, an A-B-A song in triple time, is highlighted by the gorgeous main theme presented by the clarinet (used so memorably in

the film score of *Out of Africa*), gently accompanied by the orchestra. The final movement is a Rondo, the main theme of which is a witty exchange between clarinet and orchestra. Typically for Mozart, amid the cavalcade of alternating sections between statements of the Rondo theme are the occasionally darker-hued passages which chase away the sunlight ever so briefly – though always with much challenging material for the soloist. It's worth noting that Mozart substituted flutes in the orchestra for his usual oboes, allowing the solo clarinet to stand out in higher relief.

Symphony No. 9 in D minor (completed by Samale/Phillips/Cohrs/Mazzuca)

Anton Bruckner

(b. Ansfelden, 1824 / d. Vienna, 1896)

First performance of the version to be presented tonight: October 15, 2011 in Breda, Netherlands
This is the ESO premiere of any version of the piece

Bach's *The Art of Fugue*; Mozart's *Requiem*, Mahler's *Tenth*, and of course Schubert's "*Unfinished*" *Symphony* – to the list of masterpieces left incomplete by their creators belongs Bruckner's *Ninth Symphony*, creating even more conjecture and speculation on a work by a composer whose music is continually subject to conjecture and speculation.

A lot of that was brought on by Bruckner himself. Many versions of his symphonies exist, in part because his own insecurity and the desire to have his music heard led him to alter – at times substantially – his music from performance to performance. Bruckner died before completing his Ninth Symphony, but three movements were completely scored and the final movement was nearly finished. Attempts to complete what Bruckner had started have been made over the years. Tonight's four-movement version of the work is based on a completion prepared by four scholars (Nicola Samale, Giuseppe Mazzuca, John Phillips, and Benjamin-Gunnar Cohrs) dating as far back as 1984, subjected to numerous revisions, and realized finally in 2011.

The scale of the symphony is enormous. But for Bruckner, each time he took on a symphonic score, he was attempting to encapsulate the divine. "The act of composing was to Bruckner part of his indestructible religious life," writes the *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, "as well try to persuade him that there was no God in Heaven as criticize the scope and structure of his symphonies, which belonged to that God." Each movement is a mammoth structure of its own, and references to music previously heard help to link each disparate movement to the work as a whole. As frail and failing as Bruckner's body may have been as he raced to complete the work, his musical mind continued to take the increasingly chromatic and visionary palette of Wagner and move it even more aggressively forward.

The drone of the opening does not prepare one for the intensity of the main theme when it emerges from it. Characteristically (for Bruckner), a contrasting theme has a hymn-like quality. "Apocalyptic" is how more than one scholar has termed the unexpected ending - an open fifth which ushers in the

Scherzo second movement. This is no jovial reprieve; both the scherzo main subject and its contrasting trio have a menacing undercurrent.

The slow movement - often presented as the final movement in many performances of the work ("there is something satisfying and uplifting in closing with the adagio," writes Wayne Reisig) - is begun with a long, searching passage that reaches a shattering climax, giving way to a sorrowful song, which in turn gives way to an unusual, almost march-like idea which contains music from the opening movement.

Simon Rattle has recorded the *Ninth Symphony* with the newly-constructed finale, and said this: "Of roughly 650 bars, nearly 600 are either written in full score by Bruckner or can be clearly reconstructed from his extensive sketches. And these four wonderful musicians, who have worked on the final for so many years, said at the end they had to compose only 28 bars using material that was already there." Using techniques in final symphonic movements that Bruckner used often, the musicians who finished what Bruckner had begun, again in Rattle's words, have created a finale that "has all the bursting energy of a supernova, and an overarching sense remains that even in the face of death and adversity there will be triumph."*

*Quotes used with permission of Sir Simon Rattle
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