

## TCHAIKOVSKY & FOLKSONG

April 19, 2024 • 8:00 PM

ESO Pairings presented by Tumbler & Rocks

Featuring:  
**Fawzi Haimor**, conductor – *see bio on page 4.*

*To read the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra roster, see page 5.*

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This performance does not include an intermission.

*Please hold your applause until the end of each piece.*

### **BATES**

*Mothership*

(10')\*

### **TCHAIKOVSKY**

*Symphony No.2 in C minor, Op.17*

(32')\*

- I - Andante sostenuto – Allegro vivo*
- II - Andantino marziale, quasi moderato*
- III - Scherzo: Allegro molto vivace*
- IV - Finale: Moderato assai – Allegro vivo*

*Program subject to change.*

\*indicates approximate performance duration

## ***Mothership*** **Mason Bates**

(b. Richmond, Virginia, 1977)

First performed: March 21, 2011, in Sydney, Australia

The ESO had programmed this work for a performance in 2020, but it was cancelled due to the pandemic. It is receiving its ESO premiere at this performance, and is the first work by Mason Bates played by the ESO.

Composer of the Grammy-winning opera *The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs*, Mason Bates is imaginatively transforming the way classical music is created and experienced as a composer, DJ, and curator. As the first composer-in-residence appointed by the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, he presented a diverse array of artists on his series KC Jukebox, using immersive production and stagecraft. Championed by legendary conductors including Riccardo Muti, Michael Tilson Thomas, and Marin Alsop, his symphonic music is the first to receive widespread acceptance for its unique integration of electronic sounds. Named as the most-performed composer of his generation in a recent survey of American music, Bates has also composed for feature film.

Highly informed by his work as a DJ, his curatorial approach integrates adventurous music, ambient information, and social platforms in a fluid and immersive way. Working in clubs under the name DJ Masonic, Bates has developed *Mercury Soul*, a show combining DJing and classical music, to packed crowds with clubs and orchestras around the country. A diverse artist exploring the ways classical music integrates into contemporary cultures, he serves on the faculty of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Of his work *Mothership*, Mason Bates writes:

The mothership floats high above, an orchestra pulsing rapidly with a heart of techno. At several moments in the piece, various soloists dock with the mothership, dropping in with solos both virtuosic and lyrical. The work was commissioned by Michael Tilson Thomas and the YouTube Symphony, which premiered the work in March 2011 at the Sydney Opera House in Australia.

The piece follows the form of a scherzo with double trio. But while symphonic scherzos historically play with dance rhythms such as the waltz, *Mothership* looks to 21st Century dance music (such as techno) to enliven its journey. The brief solos can be played as written or improvised.

Many thanks to Michael, whose mentoring greatly helped the work on many levels, and to the musicians from around the world who came together in Sydney and helped *Mothership* lift off.

## ***Symphony No.2 in C minor, Op.17*** **Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky**

(b. Kamsko-Votkinsk, 1840 / d. St. Petersburg, 1893)

First performed: February 7, 1873, in Moscow

Last ESO performance: Symphony Under the Sky 2006

The summer of 1872 was one of those all too rare times in the life of Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky – a time of calm, serenity, and true happiness. He spent that time with family at his sister’s home in the Ukrainian village of Kamenka, and from this oasis of leisure and love comes his *Second Symphony*, surely one of the most contented and beguiling of any of his works. It is worth noting, however, that in 1880, influenced by music he had come to know (notably D elibes’ *Sylvia* and Bizet’s *Carmen*), he made substantial revisions to the first movement, and altered the finale as well.

His father and brother spent time with the rest of the family over the summer, and in only a few weeks (quite quickly for Tchaikovsky), he had sketched out all four movements of the symphony. As was not unusual for Tchaikovsky, many of the themes in the work were based on the Ukrainian folk songs that Tchaikovsky heard or was reminded of during his frequent visits. The particular region of Ukraine in which his sister lived was known in Russia, derogatively, as “Little Russia,” and it was critic Nikolai Kashkin who gave the work the nickname “Little Russian” symphony, by which it was long known. It has also been more correctly identified as the “Ukrainian” symphony, although it is worth stressing that Tchaikovsky used neither.

The first movement begins with a slow introduction, based on a variation of the song “Down By Mother Volga.” The Allegro vivo section of the movement is more dramatic and theatrical, strongly contrasted by a quiet secondary theme introduced by solo clarinet.

The second movement is a fine example of making lemonade from lemons. Three years before writing this symphony, Tchaikovsky had experienced utter failure with an opera based on the Undine legend (the same legend Dvoř ak used for his opera *Rusalka*). But rather than scrap what he had already written, Tchaikovsky took music intended for a wedding scene from the opera, and that forms the basis for the main theme of the second movement of the symphony. Another Ukrainian folk song, “Spin, My Spinner” – also introduced first in the clarinet – is a contrasting melody.

The Scherzo is all original music of Tchaikovsky, which bristles with energy that seems determined to break loose – darting among the woodwinds and strings. Halfway through, a trio subject of a deliberate and much more restrained manner takes the field briefly, but seems impatient to move on, back to the high energy Scherzo theme to finish out this five-minute movement.

The final movement is a full-fledged set of variations on yet another Ukrainian folk song, “The Crane.” Tchaikovsky reveals a too-seldom sense of humour throughout this movement, while also demonstrating his gift for orchestration. There is an almost self-deprecating seriousness to the way the movement begins, but once the Presto portion starts, the theme is treated to a wide variety of dashing orchestral colours. There are two moments where it seems like the  lan of the music will come crashing down, but it is only temporary, and Tchaikovsky’s fondness for Ukraine and its folk traditions is never more vividly expressed than here.

Program notes   2024 by D.T. Baker, except as noted.

## Biographies

### Fawzi Haimor

Conductor

Fawzi Haimor has been General Music Director of the Württembergische Philharmonie Reutlingen from September 2017 until the end of 2020. The Orchestra celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2020, opening this special year with Beethoven's 9th Symphony and a world premiere by Kareem Roustom before the other celebration programmes fell victim to pandemic restrictions. Fawzi Haimor's official farewell to the orchestra takes place in summer 2022 with Mahler's 3rd Symphony and record a CD with works by Reza Vali.

Highlights of the 2022/23 season include concerts with The Florida Orchestra with works by Cerdania, Marsalis, Ellington und Gershwin and his debut with Utah Symphony Orchestra with Strawinsky's "Feuervogel" (1919) and Orff's "Carmina Burana."

Fawzi Haimor has conducted many orchestras including the Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, BBC Philharmonic, Orchestre de chambre de Paris, NDR Radiophilharmonie Hannover, WDR Funkhausorchester in Cologne, Deutsche Radiophilharmonie Saarbrücken Kaiserslautern, Orquesta Sinfónica do Porto Casa da Música, the Oulu Sinfonia and Orchestra Sinfonica di Milano Giuseppe Verdi. In the US, he has worked with The Florida Orchestra, Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra, New West Symphony and the New Mexico Philharmonic, among others. In July 2017, he made his acclaimed debut at the Grant Park Music Festival in Chicago. He has also conducted the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, Kyoto Symphony Orchestra and the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra. In May 2018, he made his debut at London's Barbican Centre conducting the Chineke! Orchestra as part of the Max Richter Weekend.

Highlights of recent years have included his debut at the Musikverein Vienna with the Württembergische Philharmonie Reutlingen, as well as his debut with the BBC Symphony Orchestra (including Prokofiev's 7th Symphony), a tour with the NDR Radiophilharmonie Hannover and The King's Singers, a re-invitation to the Chineke! Orchestra (including a concert at the Southbank Centre London) and concerts with the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. Important upcoming projects are his debut with Utah Symphony conducting Orff's "Carmina burana" as well as returning to The Florida Orchestra.

Fawzi Haimor has a wide-ranging repertoire with a focus on late German Romanticism and 19th and 20th century Russian and American composers. He is also a dedicated interpreter of contemporary music and has premiered works by Mason Bates, Kareem Roustom and other composers.

Fawzi Haimor was born in Chicago and grew up in the Middle East and San Francisco. Until 2015, he was Assistant Conductor and Resident Conductor at the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, where he worked with conductors such as Manfred Honeck, Leonard Slatkin, Gianandrea Noseda, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos and Yan Pascal Tortelier. Previously, he was Assistant Conductor of the Alabama Symphony Orchestra. During this time, he founded the Alabama Symphony Youth Orchestra and served as its first music director. Together with his wife and four children he lives in the San Francisco Bay area.

## Meet the Musicians

**Michael Stern**, Artistic Advisor

**Cosette Justo Valdés**, Resident Conductor and Community Ambassador

**William Eddins**, Music Director Emeritus, Conductor

### Violin I

Robert Uchida, Concertmaster

*The John & Barbara Poole Family Concertmaster Chair*

Eric Buchmann, Associate Concertmaster

Broderick Olson

Ewald Cheung

Joanna Ciapka-Sangster

Laura Veeze

Anna Kozak

Aiyana Anderson-Howatt

Anita Walsh

### Violin II

Dianne New – Principal

Susan Flook – Assistant Principal

Heather Bergen

Yue Deng

Danielle Greene

Buon Park

Yeeun Ha

Zoë Sellers (on leave)

### Viola

Keith Hamm – Principal

Ethan Filner – Assistant Principal

Clayton Leung

Rhonda Henshaw

Stefan Jungkind

### Cello

Rafael Hoekman – Principal

*The Stuart & Winona Davis Principal Cello Chair*

Julie Hereish – Assistant Principal

Ronda Metzies

Meran Currie-Roberts

Victor Pipkin

### Bass

Hilda Cowie – Principal

Chris Jones – Acting Assistant Principal

Janice Quinn

Rob Aldridge

Chantel Leung

Douglas Ohashi (on leave)

*The ESO works in proud partnership with the AF of M  
(American Federation of Musicians of the United States  
and Canada) Local 390.*

### Flute

Elizabeth Koch – Principal

Sarah Pollard – Assistant Principal

### Oboe

June Kim – Principal

Paul Schieman – Assistant Principal

*The Steven & Day LePoole Assistant Principal Oboe Chair*

### Clarinet

Julianne Scott – Principal

David Quinn – Assistant Principal

### Bassoon

Bianca Chambul – Principal

Edith Stacey – Assistant Principal

### Horn

Allene Hackleman – Principal

Megan Evans – Assistant Principal

Ryan Garbett – Assistant Principal

Donald Plumb – Assistant Principal

### Trumpet

Robin Doyon – Principal

Frédéric Payant – Assistant Principal

### Trombone

John McPherson – Principal

Kathryn Macintosh – Assistant Principal

### Bass Trombone

Tyler Cairns – Principal

### Tuba

Scott Whetham – Principal

### Timpani

Barry Nemish – Principal

### Percussion

Martin Bui – Principal

### Harp

Nora Bumanis – Principal