



BRATISLAVA MUSIC FESTIVAL
53rd year 28. 9. – 15. 10. 2017

Thursday, 28th September

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Slovak Philharmonic

James Judd, *conductor*

Alban Gerhardt, *cello*

Franz Schmidt Overture, Intermezzo and Carnival Music from the opera *Notre Dame*

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky Variations on a Rococo Theme, Op. 33

Robert Schumann Symphony No. 2 in C major Op. 61

Bratislava native **Franz Schmidt** wrote many significant symphonic works. However, it was his opera *Notre Dame* based on the famous novel by Victor Hugo that brought him the greatest popularity. Its Vienna premiere in 1914 secured international recognition for the composer. It is rarely staged nowadays, but three orchestral intermezzi have become a stable part of the repertory of symphonic orchestras. *Variations on a Rococo Theme* were composed by **Tchaikovsky** for his colleague from the Saint Petersburg Conservatory, the German teacher W. Fitzenhagen. It is his arrangement which has been played to this day. **Robert Schumann** conceived his *Symphony No. 2* in C major in the spirit of Beethoven's *Fate Symphony* as a victory over the unfavourable destiny. Its second movement – a virtuoso Scherzo – thoroughly examines the skills of the string section of any orchestra.

The opening concert of the 53rd Bratislava Music Festival will present the Slovak Philharmonic under the baton of its new music director, the charismatic **James Judd**. The soloist **Alban Gerhardt** is “*the wizard who can sound his instrument in a masterful virtuosity*” (Tagesspiegel), and “*the calm authority ... one of the finest cellists around – expressive, unshowy and infinitely classy*” (The Guardian).

Friday, 29th September

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra

Zubin Mehta, *conductor*

Rainer Honeck, *violin* **Robert Nagy**, *cello*

Martin Gabriel, *oboe* **Sophie Dartigalongue**, *bassoon*

Johannes Brahms Tragic Overture, Op. 81

Joseph Haydn Sinfonia concertante in B flat major, Hob. I:105

Béla Bartók Concerto for Orchestra

Out of **Brahms'** two symphonic overtures from 1880 the *Tragic* one represents a more personal expression than the occasional *Academic* one. In his *Sinfonia concertante* **Haydn** played with a unique quartet of solo instruments "opposing" the orchestra.

Concerto for Orchestra belongs to the last works of **Bartók's** creative period. He composed it in 1943 in American exile on the commission of Serge Koussevitzky, who premiered it one year later with the Boston Symphony Orchestra.

This year one of the most prestigious world orchestras – **Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra** – commemorates the 175th anniversary of its origination. Its musical qualities are unrivaled according to critics. It will give a guest performance at the BMF under the leadership of the most distinguished conductor **Zubin Mehta**. He grew up surrounded by music and although his father wanted him to become a doctor, Zubin Mehta stayed with music and his "*colourful energetic performance*" has been healing souls for decades.

Saturday, 30th September

4 p.m.

Small Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Guarneri Trio Prague

Čeněk Pavlík, *violin* **Marek Jerie**, *cello* **Ivan Klánský**, *piano*

Joseph Haydn Trio in G major, Hob. XV:25

Bedřich Smetana Trio in G minor, Op. 15

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy Trio in D minor, Op. 49

Joseph Haydn composed his *Trio in G major* during one of his London visits. It is sometimes referred to as “Gypsy” due to its third movement (Rondo all’Ongarese), which uses some elements of Gypsy band music. **Bedřich Smetana** dedicated his famous tragic *Trio in G minor* to his daughter Bedřiška, who died when she was only four years old and her death prompted the origination of the work. The closing work of the concert, **Mendelssohn’s** *Trio in D minor*, became one of the composer’s most popular works immediately after its birth.

In the previous year the **Guarneri Trio Prague** celebrated three decades on stage. It belongs to the world elite among piano trio ensembles. The body is distinguished by an impeccable concord and technical virtuosity. It has recorded all piano trios by Beethoven, Mendelssohn, Schubert, Dvořák, Shostakovich, Brahms, Suk, Mozart and Smetana.

6 p.m.

Great Evangelical Church

Solamente naturali

Miloš Valent, *artistic leader, violin*

Vocale Ensemble SoLa

Hilda Gulyášová, *choirmaster*

Johann Sebastian Bach Cantata BWV 8

Jan Dismas Zelenka vocal-instrumental works – a selection

The ensembles **Solamente naturali** and **Vocale Ensemble SoLa** will present church music of the two most important representatives of German liturgical music – Evangelical (**Johann Sebastian Bach**) and Catholic (**Jan Dismas Zelenka**).

Sunday, 1st October

4 p.m.

Small Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Piano Recital Andrew Brownell

Ludwig van Beethoven Sonata quasi una fantasia No. 1 Op. 27

Ján Nepomuk Hummel Fantasie E flat major, Op. 18

Johann Sebastian Bach French Suite No. 6 in E

Franz Liszt Soirée de Vienne No. 6

Tarantella from the cycle

Années de Pèlerinage: Venezia e Napoli

The concert will be opened by music of the composers who almost belonged to one generation and were famous rivals during their lives, too. **Beethoven's** *Sonata quasi una fantasia No. 1 Op. 27* is a younger sibling of the famous *Moonlight Sonata* sharing the same opus number. It is in E flat major, similarly to **Hummel's** *Fantasie Op. 18*, one of the most significant works of this Bratislava native, adumbrating the early Romantic style. Both pieces combine the sonata and fantasia form. The programme is supplemented with **Bach's** enchanting suite and **Liszt's** virtuoso tarantella from the cycle *Années de Pèlerinage*, inspired by a fiery Italian dance.

At the prestigious J. S. Bach International Competition in Leipzig **Andrew Brownell** won the silver (2002), he's the winner of the J. N. Hummel International Piano Competition in Bratislava (2005), and came second at the Leeds International Piano Competition (2006). Expert critique named him "*one of the most significant pianists of his generation*" and The Oregonian claims that Brownell "*impresses as much with his mind as with his hands...*".

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Slovak Chamber Orchestra

Ewald Danel, artistic leader, violin, conductor

Václav Hudeček, violin

Tadeáš Salva Ballad per duodecimo archi

Johann Benda Violin Concerto in G major (arr. by S. Duskin)

Jean-Marie Leclair Violin Concerto in A minor, Op. VII/5

Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky The Seasons, Op. 37b

Compositions using the ballad form express the essence of **Salva's** poetics distinctive by a tense expression. His musical language is based on a synthesis of Slovak folk song inspiration with techniques of the European avant-garde, mostly the Polish composing school. The concertos by **Benda** and **Leclair** come from the late Baroque or early Classicism, they are independent of the period style defined most of all by Italian violin composers and virtuosos. In these interesting and less frequently staged works the superb Czech violin virtuoso **Václav Hudeček** will appear as a soloist, returning to Bratislava after a longer period.

Tchaikovsky's *The Seasons* were commissioned as a series of twelve piano pieces to particular months of the year carrying programme titles. For its beautiful melodies and strong potentiality the work has been appearing on world concert stages, also thanks to various transcriptions for chamber and orchestral ensembles.

Monday, 2nd October

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Tongyeong Festival Orchestra

Heinz Holliger, *conductor*

Clara-Jumi Kang, *violin*

Maurice Ravel Mother Goose Suite

Isang Yun Violin Concerto No. 3

Camille Saint-Saëns Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso
for Violin and Orchestra, Op. 28

Maurice Ravel Le Tombeau de Couperin

The *Mother Goose Suite* was composed by **Ravel** inspired by the fairy tale by Charles Perrault. He wrote it for his friends Godebskis' children as a suite for the piano four hands. Later he orchestrated the piece with a huge success and afterwards he let himself be persuaded for a ballet arrangement. **Isang Yun**, the most important Korean composer, wrote three violin concertos, the last one was written in 1992. **Camille Saint-Saëns**, too, wrote three violin concertos, as well as a number of shorter pieces for violin and orchestra, out of which *Introduction and Rondo Capriccioso* became the most popular.

The closing piece of the concert is Ravel's suite *Le Tombeau de Couperin*, which – similarly to the *Mother Goose Suite* – originated as a transcription of the original piano piece.

The concert is conducted by one of the most distinguished musicians of today **Heinz Holliger**, known also as a great oboist, to whom such masters as Ligeti, Stockhausen, Penderecki, Lutosławski, Berio and others dedicated their compositions. He composes himself, and likes to collaborate with young people. **Clara-Jumi Kang** was included by the Dong-A Times review among one hundred most promising and most influential personalities in Korea. Listeners from prestigious world halls appreciate the performer's excellent technique as well as the sound of the instrument Antonio Stradivarius ex Strauss from 1708, loaned to the artist by the Korean Samsung Foundation of Culture.

Tuesday, 3rd October

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Junge Deutsche Philharmonie

Jukka-Pekka Saraste, *conductor*

Tzimon Barto, *piano*

Kaija Saariaho *Laterna magica* for Orchestra

Sergey Prokofiev Piano Concerto No. 3 in C major, Op. 26

Carl Nielsen Symphony No. 4, Op. 29

Four years ago the Finnish composer **Kaija Saariaho** visited Bratislava as a guest of the Melos-Ethos festival. Her piece *Laterna magica* was commissioned by the Berlin Philharmonic and premiered in 2009 under the baton of Simon Rattle. **Prokofiev's** magical *Piano Concerto No. 3* belongs to the most popular works of the great Russian master. **Carl Nielsen's** *Symphony No. 4* has a subtitle "*The Inextinguishable*".

The Danish composer wrote it during World War 1.

The orchestra composed of excellent young musicians is conducted by a respected authority – the Finnish conductor of world fame. **Jukka-Pekka Saraste** "*speaks in a low voice and weighs his words, his natural authority radiates and people respect it also due to the artist's unique charm.*"

The creative atmosphere of the concert is strengthened also by the presence of an unconventional American pianist. **Tzimon Barto** speaks seven languages, has written several novels and poetry, he is a bodybuilder. The turning point in his pianistic career came in the middle of 1980s when he played in the Viennese Musikverein and at the Salzburg festival on the invitation of Herbert von Karajan. From that moment on he has been exciting audiences and critics on both sides of the Atlantic.

Wednesday, 4th October

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Slovak Philharmonic

Lawrence Foster, *conductor*

Evgeny Kissin, *piano*

Franz Liszt Orpheus, symphonic poem

Béla Bartók Piano Concerto No. 2

Johannes Brahms Symphony No. 4 in E minor Op. 98

Orpheus is the fourth out of 12 symphonic poems by **Franz Liszt** written by this famous late Romantic composer during his years-long Weimar stay.

Bartók's *Piano Concerto No. 2* from 1931 belongs to the most demanding works of piano literature. It will sound rendered by our notable guest **Evgeny Kissin**, who was not only a child prodigy, but truly a little genius. He is an accomplished virtuoso, fascinating player, versatile artist with a sharp intellect and admirable spirit, as the reviewers write. Being only 17-year-old he captivated Herbert von Karajan; in Carnegie Hall he debuted under Zubin Mehta; in 1997 he was the first pianist to give a solo recital at London Proms, he performed for the six-thousand-strong audience and rewarded their favour with seven encores.

In the second part of the concert the **Slovak Philharmonic** will perform **Brahms' Symphony No. 4 in E minor**, which represents the acme of the symphonic work of the famous composer. It is a chant about the way to the present and future man, which leads through a deep inclination to tradition, and about the belief in love and good which is the top humanist value.

Thursday, 5th October

7 p.m.

Column Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

West-Slovakian Songs

by **Leoš Janáček, Vítězslav Novák, Eugen Suchoň**
and **Štefan Németh-Šamorínsky**

Eva Šušková, soprano **Matúš Šimko, tenor** **Peter Pažický, piano**

When the Slovak composers started to dream about the possibility of the autonomous Slovak music, those dreams had to begin with a recognition of Slovak folk song. In this respect Matica slovenská and its first editors (Ján Kadavý, Karol Ruppeldt, Miloš Ruppeldt) made a huge step. Their *Slovak Songs* created a basic song repertory which stimulated the following collection as well as autonomous creation. Following the concert of East-Slovakian songs (BMF 2006) the festival presents the arrangements of West-Slovakian songs. The concert is in itself a special remembrance of Janko Blaho, the main collector, connoisseur, and inspirator of new creation leaning on the West-Slovakian folklore. His collections served as a source material not only for **Vítězslav Novák** and **Štefan Németh-Šamorínsky**, but also for **Eugen Suchoň**. **Janáček's** activities are joined with the songs sung to him by the Slovak worker Eva Gabel.

Friday, 6th October

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Tonkünstler-Orchester Niederösterreich

Yutaka Sado, conductor

Roger Muraro, piano

Valérie Hartmann-Claverie, Ondes Martenot

Olivier Messiaen Turangalîla Symphony

Olivier Messiaen's *Turangalîla Symphony* is a unique monumental opus of the 20th century symphonic music. The French composer worked on it for several years, finished it in December 1948 and one year later it was premiered in Boston under the baton of Leonard Bernstein and caused quite a stir.

Messiaen was motivated to the creation of this mystic work by his fascination with the Tristan and Isolde myth. The title of the symphony in ten movements derives from two sanskrit words – *turanga* and *lîla*. Their real meaning is not clear but in Messiaen's understanding it is a "love song and hymn of joy, time, movement, rhythm, life and death". Due to its exactingness only several world artists dedicate themselves to the study and performance of this legendary opus: the pianist **Roger Muraro** is one of them. And **Valérie Hartmann-Claverie** is indubitably the person to go to when it comes to playing the Ondes Martenot.

Saturday, 7th October

4 p.m.

Small Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Slovak Piano Music

Alexander Albrecht

Sonata F major for piano

Ivan Hrušovský

Fantasie, Introduction and Fugue in Ancient

Style for piano four hands

Milan Novák

Piano Suite No. 1

Juraj Hatrík

Little Suite for Piano

Toccata

Hanuš Domanský

Dithyrambs

**Samuel Michalec, Klára Varsamisová, Norbert Daniš,
Eduard Lenner, Peter Nágel, Peter Šándor**

This evening presenting the Slovak piano music brings works by significant representatives of our modern music culture. Due to his orientation on music of important European composers from the turn of the 20th century **Alexander Albrecht** stood in the shadow of his generation peers for a long time, who – in harmony with the period aesthetics – worked mostly with the Slovak folk music inspirations. While searching for their compositional identity the contemporaries **Ivan Hrušovský** and **Milan Novák** faced the aesthetics of Neoclassicism as a style returning to musical forms and stylistic characteristics of past epochs. **Hanuš Domanský** and **Juraj Hatrík** belong to the generation of the so-called avant-garde which appeared in the musical life in the 1970s and dealt mostly with the work of West-European composers, but finally both let themselves be inspired mostly by the classics of European music of the first half of the 20th century.

This concert continues the projects presenting the Slovak piano music (BMF 2015) and Slovak chamber music (BMF 2016) which met with positive response of the listeners.

Sunday 8th October

4 p.m.

Column Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic
Slovak Music of the 19th and 20th Centuries
Octet Singers
Jozef Chabroň, conductor

music by **Ján Levoslav Bella, Štefan Fajnor,**
Mikuláš Schneider-Trnavský and others

In 1863 two volumes of **Bella's Slovak Male Chorales** were published containing 25 pieces for male chorus. It was the first print setting to music Slovak poetry of consequential poets. The work remained unknown until recently and it has never been performed as a whole. Bella's example was soon followed by **Štefan Fajnor**. The phenomenon of male choruses was the first expression of the Slovak musical culture in the time when no orchestras or opera houses existed in Slovakia.

A successful chamber ensemble consisting of members of the Slovak Philharmonic Choir will perform at the concert, led by the SPC choirmaster **Jozef Chabroň**.

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic
Petr Eben / Jan Amos Komenský
The Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Heart

Marek Vrábek, organ **Marek Eben, narration**

"It is inherent to art to stimulate love in people and in this way to touch the eternity." In the spirit of this belief the significant Czech composer **Petr Eben** was inspired by the well-known work of the philosopher, writer, teacher and theologian John Amos Comenius. *The Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Heart* reflects also the composer's inner world – unconcealed religious conviction, respect for the heritage of Antiquity, for poetry, both sacred and secular one. The whole-evening organ cycle was performed for the first time in 1991 in Australian Melbourne, and later at many important European festivals. Although it has been played also in Bratislava within a dissertation concert, on the professional stage it is now presented in the Slovak premiere. Programming it we hope to accomplish the composer's idea: *"music is not only something that sounds, but something that appeals. A piece is not a released balloon, but a ball thrown and waiting for the hands which would catch it..."* We hope the concert performed by the organist **Marek Vrábek** with the narration of Comenius' words by the composer's son **Marek Eben** will only prove this.

Monday, 9th October

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Opera Gala Evening

Slovak Philharmonic

Speranza Scappucci, *conductor*

Lawrence Brownlee, *tenor*

American tenor **Lawrence Brownlee** belongs to the most sought-after bel canto tenor singers of the world. Being a pleasant unaffected person, having perfect high notes and “c”-tones which he masters like a cinch, Brownlee triumphs on the most prestigious world stages. He comes to Bratislava again after five years, in the time when he has just been awarded the Opera Male Singer of 2017 award (Anna Netrebko being the Opera Female Singer of 2017) by the International Opera Awards foundation. This award is something of an “opera Oscar” for singers. The concert is co-organized by the BMF in collaboration with the KAPOŠ agency. He will be accompanied by the Slovak Philharmonic led by a charming lady holding the conductor’s baton, the Italian **Speranza Scappucci**, who is a frequent guest of both European and American opera and concert stages.

Tuesday, 10th October

7 p.m.

Small Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Concert of Chamber Music

Alena Baeva, *violin*

Vadym Kholodenko, *piano*

Igor Stravinsky Divertimento

Franz Schubert Fantasie for Violin and Piano

Ludwig van Beethoven Sonata for Violin in G major No. 10, Op. 96

The Russian violinist **Alena Baeva** embellishes concert stages with her artistry by which she can attract both the listeners and juries at many international competitions. She is a Grand Prix holder from the 2nd year of the Moscow International Paganini Competition, she won at the 12th International Henryk Wieniawski Violin Competition. Carnegie Hall in New York, Suntory Hall in Tokyo, Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, Verdi Hall in Milan, Théâtre des Champs Elysées ... and finally the BMF: these are only some of the stops on concert stages of this excellent young violinist. At the piano we will welcome the winner of many competitions, including Van Cliburn Competition in the USA, **Vadym Kholodenko**, who recently confirmed his reputation of a “*fascinating and exciting*” performer.

Wednesday, 11th October

5 p.m.

Column Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic
Chamber Music Concert
Michal St'ahel, *cello piccolo*
Mahan Esfahani, *harpsichord*

Johann Sebastian Bach

Three Sonatas for Cello and Harpsichord BWV 1027 – 1029

Although the musicologists often discuss the term violoncello piccolo, and despite the fact that **Bach** dedicated not only his 6th solo suite but also several solo parts in his cantatas to it, today we know little about its period usage. Thus it can be a unique audio experience for the listeners to hear this Baroque instrument combined with the precise copy of the German double manual harpsichord, the model used by Bach while staging his concert pieces.

Michal St'ahel is one of our best cellists, he constantly devotes himself to the so-called historically informed performance and collaborates with many interesting musicians. **Mahan Esfahani**, a globetrotter with roots in Iran, is one of them. In addition to his other awards the young artist was proclaimed the Instrumentalist of the Year in 2014 by the Royal Philharmonic Society in London and he acquired the Gramophone Artist of the Year prize as the first harpsichord player.

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic
Slovak Radio Symphonic Orchestra
Slovak Philharmonic Choir
Slovak Radio Children's Choir
Mario Košík, *conductor*
Jozef Chabroň, *choirmaster*
Adrian Kokoš, *choirmaster*
Milan Paľa, *violin*
Marián Varga *Musica concertante*
Ladislav Burlas *Music for Violin and Orchestra*
Franz Liszt *Dante Symphony*

This year **Marián Varga** is celebrating an important jubilee. His piece *Musica concertante* was originally released on a legendary CD *Divergences*, the parting album of the Collegium musicum band. It will offer us a different, a bit non-traditional view on the iconic personality of the Slovak pop music. Another composer, celebrating his ninetieth birthday, **Ladislav Burlas** has created a number of orchestral pieces. He wrote his *Music for Violin and Orchestra* in 1974 and dedicated it to the violinist Peter Michalica. At the BMF concert it will be delivered by the outstanding Slovak violin virtuoso **Milan Paľa**, who is permanently devoting his strengths to the performance of the Slovak music.

The evening will be closed by the grand *Dante Symphony* written by **Franz Liszt** only after he had finished his symphonic poems and the first version of the *Faust Symphony*. Although the work in three movements is labeled as a symphony, it consists of three virtually independent symphonic poems lacking the typical sonata form development.

Thursday, 12th October

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Kremerata Baltica **Lucas Debargue, piano**

Béla Bartók Divertimento for String Orchestra

Joseph Haydn Piano Concerto in D major, Hob. XVIII:11

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart Piano Concerto in C major KV 246

Dmitry Shostakovich Chamber Symphony for strings and percussion

Bartók wrote his *Divertimento* for strings in 1939, at the outset of World War 2, a while before he left Hungary. It was commissioned by his friend Paul Sacher, who led Basel Chamber Orchestra at that time. In this relaxing work the composer coped with traditions and form principles of the Baroque concerto grosso. **Haydn's** playful *Piano Concerto in D major* is very popular in our country especially thanks to the arrangement of Marián Varga released on one of the first recordings of the Collegium musicum band. Equally free-minded *Piano Concerto in C major KV 246* was written by the then 20-year-old **Mozart** for the princess Antonia Lützow, a dedicated amateur pianist. *Chamber Symphony in C minor* is in fact an authorized transcription of **Shostakovich's** *String Quartet No. 8* made by Rudolf Barshai, a Russian viola player and conductor, for the string ensemble Moscow Chamber Soloists in the 1960s.

The soloist of the concert of the world-famous orchestral body established by Gidon Kremer will be **Lucas Debargue**. The young pianist who placed “only” fourth at the 15th International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow in 2015 was acknowledged by Boris Berezovsky: “People are loving Lucas Debargue because he is a real musician. He loves music passionately and knows everything about it. And not only music. He has brilliant knowledge in literature and art. All this influences his personality: he plays with such a conviction and love.”

Friday, 13th October

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic

Sinfonietta Žilina

Leoš Svárovský, conductor

Lúčnica Chorus

Elena Matušová, choirmaster

Jakub Čížmarovič, piano **Jan Fišer, violin**

Marek Štrbák, organ

Johann Nepomuk Hummel

Double Concerto for Piano, Violin and Orchestra in G major, Op. 17

Alexander Albrecht

Missa in C for strings, mixed choir and organ

renewed premiere

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy

Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 107 '*Reformation*'

Johann Nepomuk Hummel's *Double Concerto for Piano, Violin and Orchestra in G major, Op. 17* belongs to his first concertante works, therefore it is obvious that it follows the example of older classics, not Beethoven's one. The piece *Missa in C* was composed by **Alexander Albrecht** in the years 1901–1903 while he attended the higher classes of the Hungarian Royal Catholic Grammar School by the Clarissine church in Bratislava. Its premiere was visited also by his teacher and friend Béla Bartók. The piece is remarkable for its historical relation to old Pressburg's grammar school life.

For **Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy** the 300th anniversary of the proclamation of Protestant religion in Augsburg served as an immediate impetus for the composition of the so-called *Reformation Symphony*. In it the young composer's admiration for the work of Johann Sebastian Bach is reflected, too. The symphony is opened by an introduction in D major, citing the popular Protestant theme, copiously developed by Richard Wagner in his last opera Parsifal several decades later. In the final movement the theme of Luther's Protestant choral Ein Feste Burg appears. Mendelssohn's 5th *Symphony* is our contribution to the 500th anniversary of the reformation.

Saturday, 14th October

6 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic
Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra
Valery Gergiev, *conductor*

Claude Debussy

L'après-midi d'un faune / The Afternoon of a Faun

Olivier Messiaen L'Ascension, 4 meditations for orchestra

Igor Stravinsky The Firebird, ballet suite / version from 1919

Dmitry Shostakovich Symphony No. 15

Debussy's *The Afternoon of a Faun* is an iconic composition of the French music impressionism which adumbrated the development of this artistic movement long years earlier. The eponymous poem by Stéphane Mallarmé inspired the composer to write it in 1894. *L'Ascension* was composed by **Olivier Messiaen** in 1933 as symphonic meditations possessing deeply sacred content. The ballet suite *The Firebird* belongs to the so-called Russian period of **Igor Stravinsky** when he elaborated the inspirations from his native country in his compositions. The last symphony by **Dmitry Shostakovich** resulted from a profound wisdom of his life. In it the reflective elements bind with moments of piercing sarcasm. More than 25 years ago **Valery Gergiev** started his international career in Bratislava. Today one of the prominent conductors of our time he won in 1980 at the rostrum of young artists held within BMF called Interpodium. From time to time he returns to our festival (2010, 2014) – this time with his excellent **Mariinsky Theatre Orchestra from Saint Petersburg**.

Sunday, 15th October

7 p.m.

Concert Hall of the Slovak Philharmonic
Slovak Philharmonic
Slovak Philharmonic Choir
Juraj Valčuha, *conductor*
Jozef Chabroň, *choirmaster*
Roberto Cominati, *piano*
Ketevan Kemoklidze, *mezzosoprano*

Claude Debussy Iberia, 2nd movement
from the symphonic triptych *Images*
Fantaisie for Piano and Orchestra

Sergey Prokofiev Alexander Nevsky, cantata

The French-Russian programme given by our representative orchestra led by the stellar and ever more sought-after conductor **Juraj Valčuha** will conclude the 53rd year of the BMF. The rhythm of **Debussy's** *Iberia* will be followed by a pensive *Fantaisie*, the only piano and orchestra work by the composer. The soloist is an Italian pianist, the winner of many international competitions, guest of prestigious concert stages: “*His rendering of impressionists is an exciting impression in itself, an enchanting mixture of passion and excellent technique, it offers the moments of beauty and deep emotion,*” wrote the reviewers when evaluating the performance of **Roberto Cominati**. The cantata *Alexander Nevsky* by **Sergey Prokofiev**, originally composed as the film score for the eponymous movie by Sergei Eisenstein (1938), will positively be a worthy highlight of this year's festival.

TICKETS AVAILABLE

in the Reduta building of the Slovak Philharmonic
No. 1, Námestie Eugena Suchoňa, Bratislava
Monday 9.30 a.m. – 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. – 7 p.m.
Tuesday – Friday 1 p.m. – 7 p.m.

During the festival on Saturdays and Sundays one hour before the concert.

Tel. +421 2 20 47 52 93 e-mail: vstupenky@filharmonia.sk

Tickets on-line
www.bhsfestival.sk
www.navstevnik.sk
and via **Ticketportal**

The programme and performers may be subject to change.