
9 November 2016

7.30pm

Barbican Hall

**Guildhall Symphony
Orchestra**

Diego Matheuz
Conductor

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Rimsky-Korsakov
Scheherazade

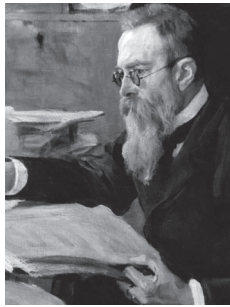
Beethoven
Symphony No. 5

Guildhall Symphony Orchestra
Diego Matheuz conductor

Wednesday 9 November 2016, 7.30pm
Barbican Hall

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908)

Scheherazade: symphonic suite, Op. 35



The Sea and Sinbad's Ship
The Tale of the Kalender Prince
The Young Prince and the Young Princess
The Festival at Baghdad; The Sea; The Ship goes to Pieces
on a Rock Surmounted by a Bronze Warrior

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade*, composed in the summer of 1888, was inspired by the anthology of stories known as *The Arabian Nights* or *The Thousand and One Nights*, collected over centuries from the folk tales of India and the Middle East. In his autobiography *My Musical Life*, the composer described the piece as 'a kaleidoscope of fairy-tale images and designs of Oriental character'. Its melodies, recalling the Asiatic vein of Borodin (who had died in 1887), are clothed in brilliant and varied orchestration, a craft of which Rimsky-Korsakov was a celebrated master: in fact, his treatise on the subject includes many examples drawn from *Scheherazade*.

The Arabian Nights is presented in the sources as a series of stories told by the seductive Scheherazade to her husband the Sultan Shakriar. The Sultan, convinced of the unfaithfulness of all women, has had all his previous wives put to death after one night. But Scheherazade begins telling him stories, ending each night's tale at dawn on a cliff-hanger, and so keeping him interested and herself alive. Finally, after a thousand and one nights, he gives up his intention to execute her. Rimsky-Korsakov represents the couple at the start of the first movement: the stern, impatient Sultan by a strident theme in octaves; his bride by an ingratiating cadenza for solo violin, supported by harp.

This, though, is almost the full extent of the work's direct story-telling. Rimsky-Korsakov's aim was to create a piece of 'symphonic music', with recurring themes 'depicting each time different traits, and expressing different moods'. To further his intention of evoking atmosphere rather than reproducing narratives, he even removed the titles which he had originally given the movements from the second edition of the score. But they have remained in

circulation, and are usually printed in programmes, as they are above, to indicate his sources of inspiration.

So we know that the main body of the first movement was suggested by the adventures of Sinbad the sailor on the high seas – an environment well known to Rimsky-Korsakov, who had toured the world as a young naval officer. But the themes which accompany Sinbad on his travels are those of the Sultan, now over gently rocking wave motion, and Scheherazade, still on solo violin in lithe dance rhythm. These themes alternate, and throw off new ideas, as the seascape becomes stormier and finally calm again.

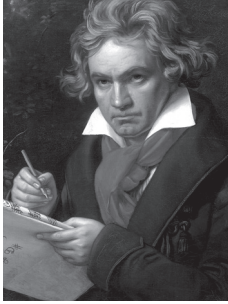
Scheherazade's cadenza returns to preface the second movement, originally suggested by the tale of a prince who disguises himself as a travelling beggar. This explains the transformations of the main theme, introduced by solo bassoon and then oboe, into a graceful dance for the violins followed by the woodwind, and in the later stages of the movement into versions which are in turn more purposeful and more ethereal. In the middle section, a threatening fanfare is similarly transformed, after the intervention of a Mendelssohnian fairy scherzo, into a strutting march.

The third movement was conceived as a love scene between a Prince, represented by an extended paragraph of ardent string melody, and a Princess, whose theme is a swaying dance. Scheherazade's violin intervenes early in the reprise of the Prince's melody, before the two ideas are reconciled towards the end of the movement.

The finale, prefaced by the themes of the Sultan and Scheherazade, presents the increasingly frenetic scene of a carnival in Baghdad. The themes of the Prince and Princess and the Sultan, as well as an echo of the Kalender Prince, are all hurled into the fray. At the height of the merry-making, the sea music from the first movement returns, building up towards a climax which, as we know from the original title, was intended to depict a shipwreck. In the calm aftermath, the final appearances of the linking themes make it clear that the Sultan has been tamed by Scheherazade's story-telling.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Symphony No. 5 in C minor, Op. 67



Allegro con brio
Andante con moto
Allegro
Allegro

Beethoven's famous Fifth Symphony was written for the most part in the winter of 1807/8. It had its first performance at an extraordinary marathon concert in Vienna in December 1808 which also included the premieres of the Sixth Symphony and the Choral Fantasia, and performances of the recent Fourth Piano Concerto, movements from the Mass in C, and more besides! The concert lasted four hours, in bitter cold, and rehearsals had been scanty: small wonder that one musician in the audience described how 'many a failure in the performance vexed our patience in the highest degree'. But Beethoven himself told his publisher that 'the public accepted everything enthusiastically'.

The Fifth Symphony shows the advances Beethoven had made in the development of the genre of the symphony, and points the way into the future. In his symphonies, building on the examples of the later symphonies of Mozart, and those of his teacher Haydn, Beethoven expanded the size of the orchestra, the scale of individual movements, their range of expression, and the variety of keys they visited. Drawing on his experience of the theatre, as well as his intense personal experience of deafness and isolation, he also increasingly bound the movements together into some kind of overall narrative: sometimes suggested by titles, as in the *Eroica* and *Pastoral* Symphonies, sometimes implicit in the musical expression.

In the Fifth, the implicit narrative is present from the start of the first movement. Whether or not Beethoven actually said of the opening motif 'Thus Fate knocks at the door' (the quotation comes from a notoriously unreliable source), the dramatic pauses, the astonishingly intensive treatment of that first idea and especially its rhythm, the vehemence of the development section and even more of the extended coda, all tell a tale of a titanic and unresolved struggle. The slow movement initially seems to offer respite from that struggle: it is a relaxed *Andante* in the mellow key of A flat major,

apparently settling into the form first devised by Haydn of variations on two themes in turn. But when the plan is broken up by digressions into the heroic key of C major (a key untouched in the C minor first movement), with the trumpets blazing as they rarely did in slow movements at the time, and when the ending is assertive rather than quiet, it is clear that the movement has become part of a longer-term strategy. And so it proves when the scherzo reverts to the initial C minor, in dark and sinister mood, but the contrasting trio section (which Beethoven originally intended to come round twice) is in C major, an almost grotesque fugato led off by the cellos and double-basses.

Now comes the Symphony's biggest formal innovation, an integration of movements which was to have a huge influence on later developments in symphonic form. The reprise of the scherzo is not a literal one, as usual, but is hushed throughout; and it is extended to form a bridge leading straight into the finale. Here the key turns decisively to C major, and piccolo, double bassoon and (for the first time in a symphony) trombones reinforce the orchestra in what is clearly a hymn of triumph. But Beethoven's plan is not quite complete yet: at the end of the development section, the dark scherzo returns at its original tempo and in its original C minor – thus enhancing the final blaze of glory of the recapitulation and coda.

Programme notes by Anthony Burton © 2016

Diego Matheuz

Conductor



Diego Matheuz is a graduate of the internationally known Venezuelan Sistema and is already widely known as one of the most promising talents from the Americas. Diego held the title of Principal Conductor of Teatro la Fenice from September 2011 to 2015 and continues to return regularly. From 2013 to 2016 Diego was also Principal Guest Conductor of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

An accomplished opera conductor, Diego's 2016/17 season is flanked by productions at two of Berlin's greatest houses - *Rigoletto* at the Deutsche Oper in October 2016 and *Il barbiere di Siviglia* at the Deutsche Staatsoper in May 2017.

Diego's orchestral engagements this season include concerts with the Orchestra del Teatro Regio di Torino at the MiTo Festival and Orchestra del Teatro la Fenice in Italy, a debut with the Hyogo Performing Arts Centre Orchestra in Japan, return visits to the BBC Philharmonic and Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra, plus conducting the prestigious ECHO Klassik Awards in Berlin.

Diego Matheuz maintains a strong association with his native orchestras, returning regularly to Caracas, and in 2013 he was appointed Associate Conductor of the Sinfónica Simón Bolívar de Venezuela. In summer 2013 he took part in the notable Sistema residency at the Salzburg Festival, appearing with the Teresa Carreño Youth Orchestra of Venezuela.

Born in 1984, Matheuz began his violin studies in his hometown of Barquisimeto before moving to Caracas. His international debut as a conductor took place with the Simón Bolívar Youth Orchestra of Venezuela on 14th March 2008 in the prestigious Casals Festival in Puerto Rico.

Image © Marco Caselli Nirmal

Amarins Wierdsma

Violin



Amarins Wierdsma began playing the violin at the age of two. She studied with Coosje Wijzenbeek and with Vera Beths at the Conservatory of Amsterdam. She is currently an Artist Diploma student at the Guildhall School, studying with David Takeno, having completed her Guildhall Artist Masters degree with distinction.

Amarins has won many competitions and was Young Music Talent of the Year 2007 for the Netherlands and, in December 2012, she received the prestigious Anton Kersjes Violin Prize. She has participated in numerous masterclasses including the International Holland Music Sessions, London Masterclasses and International Music Seminar Prussia Cove, where she took lessons from David Takeno, Ferenc Rados, András Keller among other great musicians.

Active as a chamber musician and a soloist, Amarins is a member of the Barbican String Quartet, founded at the Guildhall School under the guidance of Alasdair Tait. Over the past few years, Amarins has given solo performances of concertos by Vivaldi, Bach, Bruch, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, Brahms and Dvořák. She recently performed Vivaldi's concerto for four violins with Janine Jansen, Rosanne Philippens and Eva van Haften.

Upcoming engagements for Amarins include recitals with pianist Sophiko Simsive at the Concertgebouw, Amsterdam and the Bratislava Slovak Hall in May 2017. She plays on a Landolfi violin, which she has on loan from the National Music Instrument Foundation.

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Guildhall Symphony Orchestra

Leader: Amarins Wierdsma

RIMSKY-KORSAKOV ORCHESTRA

Violin 1

Amarins Wierdsma
Timothy Crawford
Timothy Chua
Conor Masterson
Oliver Cave
Anna Roder
Franziska Deschner
Diogo Ramos
Lucia Veintimilla Macian
Aria Kitaguchi
Federico Piccotti
Arisa Nemoto
Duygu Ince
Sofia Presta
Long Wu Chan
Juri Uchishiba
Bacem Anas Romdhani
Jan Bislin
Lucas Freitas

Violin 2

Lyrít Milgram
Patrycja Mynarska
Andrea Timpanaro
James Wicks
Monika Chmielewska
Valerie Clare Sanders
Katherine Sung
Cheuk Yin Lam
Nadine Nigl
Erin Ćoralic
Thomas Rowan-Young
Olivia Danielewicz
Katarzyna Zyznowska
Riley Court-Wood
Sara Scalabrelli
Hanna Tracz
Dominika Kusek
Sam Staples

Viola

Tim Hansson
Tom Widdicombe
Alexander McFarlane
Anna Grown
Chu-Hui Huang
Francesca Gilbert
Henrietta Hill
Jakub Chlepkó
Agnieszka Zyniewicz
Ruth Kemna
Kirsty Clark
Matteo Mizera
Kate Correia De Campos
James Flannery

Cello

Penka Petkova
Jacky Siu
Sophie Haynes
Anais Laugenie
Thomas Vidal
Patrick Moriarty
Fraser Bowles
Akito Goto
Lucy French
Gabrielle Yuen
Jonathan Gibson
Kai-Hei Chor

Double bass

José Moreira
Martin Ludenbach
Alexandre Cruz Dos Santos
Mario Torres Valdivieso
Stefano Colombelli
Ivan Rubido Gonzalez
Thomas Morgan
Piotr Hetman
Daniel Molloy
Paloma Vallecillo Rico

Harp

Elin Samuel

Flute

Luke O'Toole
Martina Mihulkova

Piccolo

Maria Jose Sola Avila

Oboe

Laura Campbell
Inoko Isobe

English horn

Inoko Isobe

Clarinet

Dimitrios Spouras
Isha Crichlow

Bassoon

Antonia Lazenby
Ana Docolin

Horn

Sián Collins
Renee Kennedy
Oliver Johnson
Elizabeth Tocknell
Jack Sewter

Trumpet

Katherine Smith
Kaitlin Wild
Oscar Whight
Connor Baldwin

Trumpet

Gideon Brooks
Matthew Stein

Trombone

Samuel Barber
Peter Thornton

Bass trombone

Stephen Williams

Tuba

Christopher Claxton

Timpani

Lewis Blee

Percussion

Peter Rayner
Harry Malabar
Matthew Frost
Tobias Jutestal
Daniel Johnstone

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Franziska Deschner
Conor Masterson
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Diogo Ramos
Arisa Nemoto
Jan Bislin
Duygu Ince
Bacem Anas Romdhani
Long Wu Chan
Lucas Freitas

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Thomas Morgan
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Flute

Simon Williams
Alexandra Griffiths

Piccolo

Enlli Parri

Oboe

Madeleine Randall
Rees Webster

Clarinet

Lauren Brown
Isha Crichlow

Bassoon

Tom Moss
Michael Elderkin

Double bassoon

Finan Jones

Horn

Matthew Head
Alex Willett
Ben Pollock
Ryan James

Trumpet

Jacob Rosenberg
Oliver Haines

Trombone

Samuel Barber
Peter Thornton

Bass trombone

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Venetia Jollands, Guildhall Artist Masters.

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