

# HART HOUSE ORCHESTRA

HENRY JANZEN, PRINCIPAL CONDUCTOR & MUSIC  
DIRECTOR

ESZTER HORVÁTH, CONDUCTOR

# WINTER CONCERT

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH, 2023  
HART HOUSE GREAT HALL  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

## PROGRAMME

### Winter Bonfire Suite, Op. 122 (fragments)

Sergey Prokofiev

- I. Departure
- II. Snow Behind the Window
- III. Waltz on the Ice

### Wenn Bach Bienen gezüchtet hätte

(If Bach Had Been a Beekeeper)

Aarvo Pärt

—- INTERMISSION —-

### Symphony No. 5 in D minor, Op. 47

Dmitri Shostakovich

- I. Moderato
- II. Allegretto
- III. Largo
- IV. Allegro non troppo



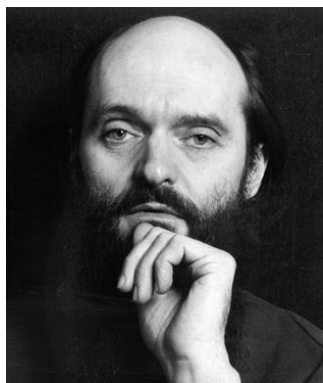
### **Sergey Prokofiev: *Winter Bonfire Suite*, op. 122 (fragments)**

*Scored for 2 flutes, oboe, 2 clarinets, bassoon, 4 horns, 2 trumpets, trombone, tuba, strings, piano, harp and percussion.*

Prokofiev is one of the few 20<sup>th</sup> century major composers to write a significant amount of children's music. *Winter Bonfire* was composed in 1949-1950 as a radio play for narrator, orchestra and chorus set to a text by Samuil Marshak. At the time, Prokofiev's music, like that of fellow composers Shostakovich and Khachaturian, was a victim of the infamous "Zhdanov Decree" against "formalism" in music. *Winter Bonfire* was an attempt to rehabilitate himself, and because of that and because it was written for the official Soviet radio it was soon dismissed as "Soviet music", and it never achieved the popularity of *Peter and the Wolf* or *The Ugly Duckling*.

*Winter Bonfire* tells the story of a group of Young Pioneers, a Soviet youth organization, on a winter night outing. Its eight movements depict the different activities the children engage in. In to-night's concert Hart House Orchestra will perform the first three.

The first movement, "Departure" depicts the movement of a train that takes the children off to the country for fun and adventure. The next movement, "Snow Behind the Window," subdued and lyrical, features a lovely oboe solo. The third movement, one of Prokofiev's most beautiful waltzes describes the children ice-skating, and it is one of Prokofiev's most beautiful waltzes.



### **Arvo Pärt: *Wenn Bach Bienen gezüchtet hätte (If Bach Had Been a Beekeeper)***

*Scored for flute, oboe, clarinet, bassoon, horn, strings, piano and percussion.*

*If Bach Had been a Beekeeper*, completed in 1976 is one of the first works in which the Estonian composer Arvo Pärt uses a new compositional style which he named *tintinnabuli* (from *tintinnabulum* – Latin

for "little bell). The style is named for its bell-like, sidereal character that creates an effect of time suspension.

The original title of this work was *Portrait of a Musicologist Against the Background of a Wasp Nest*, which provides the key to understanding the sound of the composition. In it, Pärt combines his **new tintinnabuli style with older compositional techniques – in this case, structuring it around** a musical motif of four notes: B flat-A-C-B natural, which is J.S. Bach's musical cypher (in German musical notation B flat is B, while B natural is H, which spells B-A-C-H). Against the background of the violin tremolos, this motif appears first in the viola part, then in other groups of instruments, so that in the end we hear the buzzing sound of bees that spell out Bach's name. The work culminates in a coda featuring the music from J. S. Bach's prelude in B minor from *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, Book 1. However, Bach's three-voice prelude is not presented here as a pure quote, but each of the three voices of the prelude is added by a *tintinnabuli* voice as a comment.



### **Dmitri Shostakovich: Symphony No.5 in D minor, Op. 47**

*Scored for 2 flutes, 1 piccolo, 2 oboes, 2 B clarinets, 1 E-flat clarinet, 2 bassoons, 1 contra-bassoon, 4 horns, 3 E-flat trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, percussion, 2 harps, piano, celesta and strings.*

The story of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 5 starts with a performance of his opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* at the Bolshoy Theatre in Moscow. This opera, premiered in 1934, was Shostakovich's biggest triumph so far. It was hailed by the official critics as the first great Soviet opera, and it proved immensely popular with the audiences as well. Based on a 19<sup>th</sup> century novella, it follows the misadventures of the bored wife of a well-to-do country merchant who is driven to murder in order to be with her handsome but unworthy lover. A mixture of satire and tragedy, *Lady Macbeth* explores the theme of oppression with a combination of sex, violence and some truly beautiful music.

On January 26, 1936 Stalin decided to see the opera. Unfortunately, he didn't like it, offended both by its subject and by the very modern

music. Two days later an anonymous review titled “Muddle Instead of Music” appeared in the newspaper Pravda, the official organ of the Soviet Communist party. The article, possibly written by Stalin himself (but certainly inspired and approved by him), savaged the opera and accused it, among others, that it “tickles the perverted tastes of the bourgeoisie with its fidgety, screaming, neurotic music...” On cue, all the critics and colleagues who had praised the opera before, were now falling over themselves to recant, saying they failed to detect the opera’s shortcomings that the Pravda article pointed out. Only a few had the courage to defend the opera, among them the writer Maxim Gorki. More attacks on Shostakovich followed: he was accused of all the possible deviations from the dogma of socialist realism, including that of “formalism” – the artist’s ultimate capital sin.

The campaign had an immediate effect: under pressure from the management of the Leningrad Philharmonic Shostakovich had to withdraw his 4<sup>th</sup> Symphony just before its scheduled premiere. Moreover, all commissions and invitation for concert performances dried up, leaving him in a very precarious financial situation, just as he was expecting his first child. To make matters worse, 1936 was also the beginning of Stalin’s Great Terror, which claimed as its victims many of Shostakovich’s friends and family members, including his mother-in-law. He feared that he, too, would be arrested, and for a time he slept with a packed suitcase in the stairwell of his apartment.

Shostakovich realized that he had to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of the party ideologues, by composing a work that would fulfill the Communist Party’s populist and “heroic” dictates. This work was the 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony. The symphony was composed in the spring and summer of 1937, and was premiered on the 21<sup>st</sup> of November 1937 by the Leningrad Philharmonic under the baton of Yevgeny Mravinsky. The first performance was an unmitigated triumph, earning the composer an ovation lasting over half an hour. A few days before the Moscow premiere of the symphony in January of 1938, an article under Shostakovich’s name appeared in the one of the leading Moscow newspapers, stating that the 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony was “a Soviet artist’s practical response to just criticism”. It also provided a program: “The theme of my Fifth Symphony is the making of a man. I saw a man with all his experiences in the center of the composition,

which is lyrical in form from beginning to end. In the finale the tragically tense impulses of the earlier movements are resolved in optimism and joy of living." The party musical critics agreed too and penned glowing reviews.

On the face of it, Shostakovich gave his critics what they wanted: a traditional four movement symphony, with each movement built along the classical forms, and – most importantly – a joyful and celebratory fourth movement. But just beneath the surface, the music tells a different story.

The first movement, in a classical sonata form, opens with a canon of rising and descending figures between the upper and lower strings that leads to a bleak, wandering first theme in the first violins. The melody meanders aimlessly, with occasional interjections from the opening motto. The second theme, somewhat lighter in character, is actually a quote from Carmen's *Habanera* from Bizet's opera, played by the first violins on top of a pulsating accompaniment. After the second theme dies away, the music begins to accelerate with a short-short-long rhythm. The music becomes faster and faster, as if spiraling out of control, until the first theme returns as a grotesque, militaristic march. The music continues to accelerate towards the climax in which the second theme, emerging in the brass, takes a terrifying character. This climax leads to a short recapitulation in which the first subject returns in a brutal condensed form, followed by the second theme played as duet between flute and horn. The movement fades away, while the celesta plays a rising figure.

The second movement displays Shostakovich's sense of irony. It is a parody of a waltz, with lumbering rhythm, "wrong" note harmonies and unexpected comic turns. The grotesque character of the music evokes Mahler's sardonic scherzos.

The third movement is the emotional core of the 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony. The music is filled with anguish and lament - a requiem without words. The orchestration features no brass, and the strings are subdivided: violins in 3 parts, violas, cellos and basses in 2 parts each. The opening theme is played by the third violin, after which the first, and then the second violins are joining in. The strings then yield to a flute solo, and later on to an oboe solo. The anguish erupts as the double-bass shrieks, while the rest of the orchestra literally screams a motif

that sounds like an accusation. The movement ends, like the first one, with the celesta fading away. The simple naked outpouring of tragic meditation of the third movement challenged the regime's de facto banishment of artistic expressions of grief. This was not lost on the audience, and eyewitnesses report that many in the audience wept during the first performance.

The last movement roars in with timpani and shrill woodwind trills leading into a bombastic theme introduced by the trombones. The music races ahead relentlessly, building to a mock-celebratory theme that gives way to the second theme: a poignant horn solo, which is followed by a pleading passage for strings. The symphony comes to a close with an extended over-the-top finale.

After the deep sadness of the third movement, the jubilation of the last movement sounds unconvincing: it is Shostakovich's way of hinting that the rejoicing is forced, created under threat. There is, however, another hidden, more personal hidden message. Just before starting work on the 5<sup>th</sup> Symphony, Shostakovich composed a cycle of songs on poems by Alexander Pushkin, which he wasn't going to publish until much later in his career. The first four ascending notes of main theme of the last movement, played by the trombones, are taken from the song "Rebirth". The notes are the same ones used to set the words "a barbarian artist". In the poem, the "barbarian artist" paints over a masterpiece, but with time the foreign colours peel off, and the work of genius re-emerges. One can therefore interpret "the barbarian artist" as being Stalin, and the last movement a celebration of the victory of genius over mediocrity, Shostakovich's own victory over the artistic constraints of party ideology.



## **Henry Janzen, Music Director and Principal Conductor**

Henry Janzen's formative influences include Masterclasses with Menahem Pressler and William Primrose at the Banff School of Fine Art coupled with advanced studies in New York City with renowned pedagogues Lillian Fuchs, Arianna Bronne, Raphael Bronstein and Nathan Gordon. Subsequent teaching positions include the University of Western Michigan, Wayne State University and

University of Western Ontario. For the past 20 years Mr. Janzen has taught in the Orchestral, Applied and Chamber Music areas at the University of Guelph. In addition to regular orchestral and opera performances he has been heard in performances across North America and Europe including Prague, Salzburg and Vienna. Mr. Janzen has appeared with such diverse groups as the New York String Ensemble, Greenwich (Connecticut) Choral Society and Rackham Symphony Choir.

As conductor he has served with distinction the Michigan Youth Symphony, the Clarion Choir and Orchestra; the Dearborn Symphony and the University of Guelph Orchestra. Some of his memorable performance opportunities were the private funeral ceremony for Henry Ford II; with Lloyd Bridges in the TV movie "In the Nick of Time"; performances at the Premier Centre in Detroit with Gladys Knight and the Pips; the installations of firstly Archbishop and then Edmund Cardinal Szoka and a mass for 100,000 people with Pope John Paul II.



**MEMBERS OF THE HART HOUSE ORCHESTRA  
2022-2023 SEASON**

**VIOLIN**

Joanna Tang (CM)  
Haruna Monri (ACM)  
Timothy Leung (P)  
Trish Howells (AP)  
Clifford Chuang  
Craig Deng  
Nicole Desaulnier  
Hans Fischer  
Denis Gorod  
Rod Gonzaga  
Quinn Grundy  
Behram Hathi  
Vincent Hung  
Chris Klochek  
Ben Lai  
Mihira Lakshman  
Joshua Lau  
Sophia Lee  
Lynn Liang  
Joseph Nachman  
Daniel Nam  
Andrew Ogilvie  
Silvana Pesenti  
Ayala Revah  
Perry Wong  
Fei Ye  
Lucia Yu  
Linjia Zhou

**VIOLA**

Julian Fisher (P)  
Elizabeth Brubaker  
Jesse Coleman  
Kunihiro Ito  
Arn Macpherson  
Aaron Shulman  
Elizabeth Widner

**CELLO**

Lynn Wei (P)  
Nathaniel Dickie  
Alistair Grieve

Claire Jeon  
Tom Lee  
Richard Mills  
Hilary Parkes  
Ilyas Syed

**DOUBLE BASS**

Hannah Rubia (P)  
Marc Candeliere  
David McElroy

**FLUTE/PICCOLO**

Renee Willmon (CP)  
Laura Bolt (CP)  
Camille Beaudoin

**OBOE**

Joshua Zung  
Kristie Ng

**CLARINET**

Sean Lin (P)  
Graham Nasby

**E-FLAT CLARINET**

Stephen Fox\*

**BASSOON**

Robert Lu  
Zenghao Wang

**CONTRABASSOON**

Graham Martin

**HORN**

Adam Rosenfield (P)  
Alex Buck  
Matthew Graystone  
Elli Hung  
Joanne Yin

**TRUMPET**

Marten Humke-Weber  
Kevin Major  
Brennan Schommer

**TROMBONE**

David Arnot-Johnston (P)  
Chenhao Gong

**BASS TROMBONE**

Shaiyan Keshvari

**TUBA**

Steve Vettese

**TIMPANI**

Julia Kitaygorodsky\*

**PERCUSSION**

Julia Kitaygorodsky \*

**PIANO**

Benjamin Smith\*

**HARP**

Nicole Chang\*

CM – Concert Master

ACM – Assistant

Concert Master

P – Principal

AP – Assistant

Principal

CP – Co-principal

\*Guest Musician