



London Philharmonic Orchestra

KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI

HORN CONCERTO

ADAGIO FOR STRINGS

VIOLIN CONCERTO NO. 1

THRENODY FOR THE VICTIMS OF HIROSHIMA

KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI *conductor*

MICHAŁ DWORZYŃSKI *conductor*

BARNABÁS KELEMEN *violin*

RADOVAN VLATKOVIĆ *horn*

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

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HORN CONCERTO

Passacaglia (Lento assai) –
Rondo (Allegro Vivace)

Schubert's song cycle *Winterreise* ('Winter Journey') (1828) is the pinnacle of German romantic song. It takes a simple tale of a jilted lover fleeing the scene of his heartbreak through a winter landscape, dresses it in all the nature symbolism of German romanticism – mists, frozen streams, distant post-horns – and weaves in hints of the supernatural to portray, with shattering power, a soul at the end of its tether. No Central European composer since Schubert has been unaware of it; few can ignore it.

Well, Krzysztof Penderecki has – or so he says. It's right there in black and white on his publisher's website: his Horn Concerto *Winterreise*, composed in 2008 for the Bremen Philharmonic Society in fulfilment of a promise to his friend Radovan Vlatković, is, apparently, 'nothing to do with Schubert'. Commentators have suggested that the title comes from the fact that over the winter of 2007–8, when it was composed, Penderecki was travelling a lot – in this case, to China and South America. The composer himself locates his inspiration at the lovely 18th-century manor house and park that he's restored at Luśtawice near Tarnów. He calls the music that he writes there his *musica domestica*. 'Nature's seasons make me alter my style; it is

different in spring, autumn and winter [...] The changing landscape in Luśtawice makes me reminisce a lot. It is the past: hunting, rooted in my family tradition, reflected in the Concerto for Horn and Orchestra.'

But still, the composer of *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* understands the power of a name. Clearly, it would be pointless to listen for non-existent Schubert quotes. What is present – unmistakably – is a debt to another musical tradition: the galloping rhythm and ebullient spirit of the hunting horn, as transfigured in the finales of Mozart's and Strauss's horn concertos. Of course, it's filtered through a moody romanticism: the offstage horns of Wagner and Mahler, the Alpine vistas of Bruckner's and Schubert's symphonies, and occasionally – amidst all the energy and colour – just a hint of something eerie. Few horn concertos revel in the instrument's dark lower notes quite as thoroughly as Penderecki does here. And listen to how, in each of its short solo *cadenzas*, the horn finds a shadowy double in the lower reaches of the woodwinds: bassoon, cor anglais or bass clarinet. A *doppelgänger*? Penderecki isn't saying. But he isn't *not* saying.

The Concerto is in one movement, playing for around 17 minutes, but in two distinct sections. The *Passacaglia*

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opens in darkness, with the solo horn echoing three offstage colleagues as the strings rustle and shimmer. A drum roll, a brief *cadenza* and we're off into the *Rondo* that makes up a good three quarters of the Concerto. After the spirited first section, some episodes recur (a misty, dream-like interlude surrounded by swirling strings; a melancholy *Adagio*); some pass in the night (a trudging funeral march); others – like the recurring *cadenza* that signals each new phase of the movement – change and grow. There's a distant reminiscence of the *Passacaglia* before, in a last flurry of horn calls, the Concerto rushes headlong to its end.

'It all began with the violin,' writes Krzysztof Penderecki. 'As a young boy I always dreamt of becoming a violin player, I wanted to be a virtuoso. It was the violin, not the piano, that inspired me to write my first pieces ... I primarily write string music, it is omnipresent in my creation. I even transcribe my orchestral pieces for string instruments.'

And that's exactly what he's done here. Penderecki's *Adagio for Strings* is simply the third movement of his Third Symphony (1995), skilfully and lovingly transcribed for string orchestra (in 2013). It's not a radical reworking: Penderecki rarely divides his string ensemble into more than the traditional ten parts. Plucked notes and quiet shudders emulate the gentle shimmer of percussion; a muted cello suggests the chime of a celeste. And solo string instruments take the place of the long, haunted wind and horn solos that give this music its deep, romantic sense of endless longing and boundless space. The searching string paragraphs (marked *dolce* – 'sweetly') that open the movement and recur throughout are completely unchanged.

Serious concertgoers aren't entirely comfortable, these days, with the idea of pulling single movements out of symphonic works. Penderecki has no such qualms: 'I take what I can

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use, and make something new out of it'. And a composer with his sense of musical history will be more than aware of how the strings-only *Adagietto* from Mahler's Fifth led an independent life for much of the 20th century. From 1988, Penderecki wrestled for over seven years with the material of his Third Symphony – he actually completed and premiered both his Fourth and Fifth symphonies first. In the process, is it any surprise that movements managed to break away? With this string transcription of the *Adagio*, premiered by the Czech Philharmonic in September 2013, the symphony merely begins a new stage in its already remarkable life.

Programme notes © Richard Bratby

Andante – Tempo I – Lento – Tempo di marcia – Più mosso

Towards the end of the 1950s, Poland became the fertile breeding ground for a new generation of composers; Krzysztof Penderecki was at the forefront of the group. Commanding the attention of his compatriots and interested outsiders alike, he began to forge an exciting career at home and abroad, garnering many prestigious awards as well as taking on a sequence of leading pedagogical posts. Audiences were captivated by his dramatic and highly expressive idiom, which featured extreme instrumental techniques and radical notational experiments. These elements are particularly evident in his 1960 work for 52 string players, known as *Tren* (Threnody), but which was later dedicated 'To the Victims of Hiroshima'.

As that appended subtitle indicated, there was more to Penderecki's music than mere sonic experiments, as he further demonstrated with his *St Luke Passion*. The work, premiered in 1966, presaged the polystylism and eclecticism with which he was later to be associated. *The Passion* reflected his and his nation's deep Catholic faith, which often sat at odds with the governing Soviet authorities, while its successor, entitled *Dies Irae* (1967), confronted Poland's past, particularly the atrocities at

Auschwitz. Following these searing choral-orchestral works, Penderecki's music became more lyrical during the 1970s, paralleling the change of direction evident in his compatriot Górecki's scores (as well as that of Arvo Pärt in Estonia).

The First Violin Concerto, begun in 1976 and premiered by Isaac Stern and the Basel Symphony Orchestra under Moshe Atzmon the following year, opened this new chapter in Penderecki's output, though it was no less rooted in the past. Its neo-Romantic gestures have been variously attributed to Penderecki's fascinations with Bruckner and his 19th-century compatriot Mieczysław Karłowicz, as well as Shostakovich, while almost everyone confronted by its gravely solemn mood has drawn links between the work and the dark decades through which Penderecki had lived.

The Concerto begins with an ominous rumble of intent, humanised by the presence of the cellos, followed by the horns, upper strings and woodwind. The initial boom returns with martial-like tread, before the solo violin sounds, elegiac in its midst. Weeping Bachian semitones dominate, before the soloist's music becomes angrier. The whole Concerto is characterised by these mood swings, with virtuoso violence coming quick on the heels

of intense lyricism. Often their juxtaposition provokes moments of extreme crisis, with rhythmic discrepancies and stacked brass semitones, accompanied by the ironic glitter of the tambourine, before disappearing, gossamer-like, into the silence.

There is a moment of stasis, like the tolling of bells, from which the violin appears again, lamenting in tandem with the cor anglais. Such heartfelt moments are only brief, before music of great ferocity is unleashed, with thudding chords interrupting a fleet *cadenza*, full of double stops and flashes of optimistic lyricism. Then a march tries to break through, with caustic piccolo fifing, clarinet flourishes and the aggressive tap of a snare drum.

At first this provokes another wail from the soloist, complemented by shivering strings, before instigating a change in the violin's character. There is another *cadenza*, this time of great fury, which a march interrupts, sparking a wild *danse macabre*, with yet more dazzle, now from the celesta. But rather than kinesis, a solemn stasis eventually holds sway, as grieving low brass, verging on the diatonic, returns us to the dark murmur from which the Concerto arose.

Programme note © Gavin Plumley

THRENODY FOR THE VICTIMS OF HIROSHIMA

A scream that keeps screaming. Another, and another: a beam of searing aural pain that grows, swells, and suddenly drops away to a quiet, wailing throb. Now a clatter, a twang, a sharp inhuman screech; and a sudden, thickening swarm of sound that begins quietly and within seconds fills the whole ear with black, prickling, unendurable noise. There's nothing in 20th-century music – not by Stravinsky, not by Stockhausen, not by Cage – that wrenches your sensibilities quite as brutally as the opening of Penderecki's *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*.

The 'scream' is the dissonance created when an entire group of instruments plays together at the highest possible pitch each individual player can find (the actual note is up to the player). Those swarming noises are musicians playing on or beneath the bridge of their instruments, and plucking their strings so hard that they snap against the wood.

And yet none of this means anything without the devastating, unignorable emotional impact that those sounds create. Penderecki was the first to recognise that. Following his earlier experiments in sound with *Emanations* (1958) and *Strophes* (1959), he initially meant to emphasise the experimental credentials of this new work by calling it 8'37" – a direct homage to the composer

of 4'33" (John Cage). And experimental it certainly was: Penderecki has described how he tried to recreate with string orchestra the sounds that his avant-garde contemporaries were making using electronics. One account has him changing its title to impress a UNESCO awards panel – and without question, when it won that award in 1961, it brought its composer international fame. But his own account rings more true. As he explains:

'The piece existed only in my imagination, in a somewhat abstract way. When Jan Krenz recorded it and I could listen to an actual performance, I was struck with the emotional charge of the work. I thought it would be a waste to condemn it to such anonymity, to those "digits". I searched for associations and, in the end, I decided to dedicate it to the Hiroshima victims.'

Emotions weren't fashionable amongst post-war experimental composers, but here, they are powered through regardless. How could they not, with a composer as determined to communicate as Penderecki, who'd grown up in Nazi-occupied Poland, and lived his adult life under the shadow of the Bomb? Maybe this *Threnody* wasn't originally 'about' Hiroshima; on the other hand, what art created since August 1945 on some level

isn't? You can hear it as raw emotion, or as the superbly constructed exercise in sonority that Penderecki originally thought he'd written. But either way, once heard the *Threnody* can't be unheard. 'I decided that there was no way I could move on,' says Penderecki, explaining how he travelled from its apocalyptic sound-world to works like the Third Symphony and the Horn Concerto. 'Of course, I could write a hundred *Threnodies*, and I didn't want to. There was no way to do anything more than I had done.'

Programme note © Richard Bratby

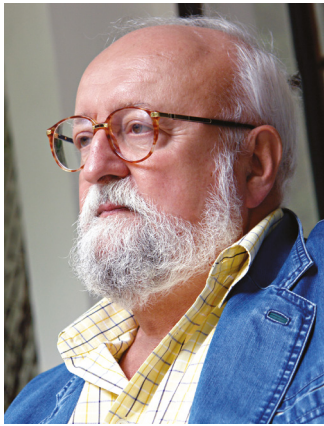
What I see now and for about 30 years, nothing has moved in the avant-garde. We pushed music so far in the 60s that even for myself, for me, I closed the door behind me, because there was no way to do anything more than I have done. The pieces like Polymorphia, like Fluorescences, like Threnody, and since that time, nobody did music which is more progressive. Nobody wrote something fresh and new for the strings.

Krzysztof Penderecki: interview with Bruce Duffie, 2000



© Benjamin Ealovega

KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI *conductor*



© Peter Andersen

Born on 23 November 1933 in Dębica, Poland, Krzysztof Penderecki studied composition under Franciszek Skołyszewski, and later at the Kraków Academy of Music under Artur Malawski and Stanisław Wiechowicz. In 1959, he composed *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima*, one of his best known and most often performed

compositions, which received the UNESCO prize in 1961. This piece was followed by *Anaklisis*, *Polymorphia*, *Fluorescences*, and, in 1966, *St. Luke Passion*, the first major work of his career which brought Penderecki to international fame and started a run of success.

In 1972 the composer began his career as a conductor. Since then he has led the world's greatest orchestras. He was first guest conductor of the Norddeutscher Rundfunk Orchester in Hamburg and the Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk Sinfonie Orchester in Leipzig. From 1992 to 2000 he served as Music Director of the Casals Festival in San Juan, Puerto Rico. In 1997 he became the Artistic Director of the Sinfonia Varsovia orchestra. Since 1998 he has been advisor to the Beijing Music Festival, and since 2000 guest conductor of the China Philharmonic Orchestra.

During a period spanning almost sixty years, Krzysztof Penderecki has composed more than 100 instrumental works, including 20 chamber works, 17 solo works, 24 concertante pieces, 27 orchestral works, 8 symphonies, 21 songs and choral works, 25 cantata and oratorio works, and 4 operas. In addition, Krzysztof Penderecki has written more than 120 music pieces for animated films, puppet theatre, dramatic theatre, television theatre, as well as fiction films and documentaries.

Krzysztof Penderecki has received a host of domestic and international prizes, including First, Second and Third Prize at the 2nd Competition for Young Polish Composers organized by the Polish Composers' Union, First Class State Award, the Polish Composers' Union Award, Grammy Award, Prize of the UNESCO International Tribune of Composers, Best Living World Composer, Prince of Asturias Prize Praemium Imperiale, and International Classical Music Award.

Krzysztof Penderecki received honorary doctorates from several dozen universities, including Bordeaux, Washington D.C., Barcelona, Madrid, Warsaw, Cracow, Buenos Aires, Glasgow, Moscow, Leipzig, New Haven and Lviv.

MICHAŁ DWORZYŃSKI *conductor*

© Christian Christodoulou



Michał Dworzyński came to international prominence in 2006 when he won the Donatella Flick Conducting Competition in London. Subsequently, he held the position of Assistant Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra, collaborating closely with Valery Gergiev and Sir Colin Davis.

Dworzyński has worked extensively in the UK appearing frequently with the London Symphony, London Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, BBC Scottish, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, CBSO and Royal Liverpool Philharmonic orchestras. He also debuted with the leading orchestras across Europe including Orchestre National de Belgique, Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich, Rundfunk Symphonie Orchester Berlin, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, RTVE Madrid and Swedish Radio Symphony orchestras. Some of his most successful collaborations took him to conduct Tokyo Symphony, Tokyo Philharmonic and NHK symphony orchestras in Japan as well as Tasmanian, Adelaide and West Australian symphony orchestras while also frequently appearing with the Warsaw Philharmonic Orchestra on tour in Europe and the Far East.

Michał Dworzyński has received notable recognition for his advocacy of Polish music. He has taken works of Lutosławski to the UK festivals in Cheltenham, Belfast and St Magnus and has made his debuts with the Israel Philharmonic and the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic conducting Górecki. He also brought Szymanowski's Stabat Mater to an international audience at the Amsterdam Concertgebouw.

Dworzyński's CD recordings for Hyperion Records with the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra of Hermann Goetz and Józef Wieniawski's piano concertos with Hamish Milne as well as violin concerti by Emil Młynarski with Eugene Ugorski met with high critical acclaim.

Michał Dworzyński was Principal Conductor of the Beethoven Academy Orchestra in Kraków, Principal Guest Conductor of the Yamagata Symphony Orchestra in Japan and Artistic Director of the Kraków Philharmonic Orchestra. Since 2017 he holds the chair of Associate Professor at the Music Academy in Bydgoszcz where he teaches orchestral conducting.

BARNABÁS KELEMEN *violin*



Violinist Barnabás Kelemen has conquered the most famous concert halls in the world with his virtuoso technique and dynamic, passionate playing style. He is a frequent guest of the BBC Symphony Orchestra, the Budapest Festival Orchestra, the Hungarian National Philharmonic Orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, and Hannover's NDR

Radiophilharmonie, to name but a few. Barnabás Kelemen has worked with conductors such as Lorin Maazel, Sir Neville Marriner, Vladimir Jurowski, Krzysztof Urbanski, Zoltán Kocsis, and Iván Fischer. On top of all this, he is a sensitive and experienced chamber musician who has played with artists including Steven Isserlis, Miklós Perényi, Alina Ibragimova, and Andreas Ottensamer.

He has recorded all of Bartók's works for violin, many of which received international acclaim, especially his CD of Sonatas for Violin and Piano Nos. 1 and 2 and Sonata for Solo Violin, which won the 2013 Gramophone Award. In 2001, his album of Liszt's complete works for violin and piano with Gergely Bogányi was awarded the Grand Prix du Disque by the International Liszt Society, while in 2003, *Diapason* magazine paid tribute to Kelemen and Tamás Vásáry's recording of Brahms's Sonatas for Violin and Piano with its influential Diapason d'Or.

Barnabás Kelemen has achieved outstanding results in prestigious contests, including first prizes at both the 1999 International Mozart Violin Competition in Salzburg and the 2002 International Violin Competition of Indianapolis, and third prize in the 2001 Queen Elisabeth Violin Competition. His artistry has been recognized with the highest professional and state honours: he has been awarded Liszt and Kossuth Prizes, and holds the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Hungary.

He established the Kelemen Quartet in 2009. They have won several competitions, toured around the world and in 2014 were awarded the only first prize at the Paolo Borciani Competition since 2008. Barnabás Kelemen is a professor of violin at Cologne University and of chamber music at the Franz Liszt Music Academy Budapest and founded the international music seminar and festival in 2016: the Festival Academy Budapest.

Barnabás Kelemen performs on the 'ex-Dénes Kovács' Guarneri del Gesù violin of 1742, generously loaned to him by the Hungarian State.

RADOVAN VLATKOVIĆ *horn*

© Branko Hrkáč



One of the leading instrumentalists of his generation, Radovan Vlatković has travelled the globe performing extensively as a soloist and popularising the horn as recording artist and teacher.

Born in Zagreb in 1962 he completed his studies with Professor Prerad Detiček at the Zagreb Academy of Music and

Professor Michael Höltzel at the Music Academy in Detmold, Germany.

From 1982 until 1990 he served as Principal Horn with the Radio Symphony Orchestra Berlin under Maestros Riccardo Chailly and Vladimir Ashkenazy. From 1992 to 1998 he held the post of Horn Professor at the Stuttgart Musikhochschule. 1998 he became Horn Professor at the renowned Mozarteum in Salzburg. Since 2000 he holds the Horn Chair 'Canon' at the Queen Sofia School in Madrid.

Radovan Vlatković has appeared as soloist with many distinguished symphony and chamber orchestras including the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, Stuttgart Radio Orchestra, Deutsches Symphonie Orchester, Munich Chamber Orchestra, BBC Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Academy of Saint

Martin in the Fields, Mozarteum Orchestra, Camerata Academica Salzburg, Vienna Chamber Orchestra, Santa Cecilia Orchestra Rome, Rotterdam Philharmonie, the orchestras of Berne, Basel and Zürich, the Lyon and Strasbourg Orchestras, NHK Orchestra, Tokyo Metropolitan and Yomiuri Orchestra, Adelaide and Melbourne Orchestras.

Radovan Vlatković has participated in first performances of works by Elliott Carter, Sofia Gubaidulina, Heinz Holliger and several Croatian composers who have written concertos for him. In May 2008 he premiered the Horn Concerto written for him by Krzysztof Penderecki together with the Bremen Philharmonic and the composer conducting.

In 2014 Vlatković was awarded an Honorary Membership of the Royal Academy of Music.

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

The London Philharmonic Orchestra is one of the world's finest orchestras, balancing a long and distinguished history with its present-day position as one of the most dynamic and forward-looking ensembles in the UK. This reputation has been secured by the Orchestra's performances in the concert hall and opera house, its many award-winning recordings, trail-blazing international tours and wide-ranging educational work.

Founded by Sir Thomas Beecham in 1932, the Orchestra has since been headed by many of the world's greatest conductors, including Sir Adrian Boult, Bernard Haitink, Sir Georg Solti, Klaus Tennstedt and Kurt Masur. Vladimir Jurowski was appointed the Orchestra's Principal Guest Conductor in March 2003, and became Principal Conductor in September 2007.

The Orchestra is based at Southbank Centre's Royal Festival Hall in London, where it has been Resident Orchestra since 1992, giving around 30 concerts a season. Each summer it takes up its annual residency at Glyndebourne Festival Opera where it has been Resident Symphony Orchestra for over 50 years. The Orchestra performs at venues around the UK and has made numerous international tours, performing to sell-out audiences in America, Europe, Asia and Australasia.

The London Philharmonic Orchestra made its first recordings on 10 October 1932, just three days after its first public performance. It has recorded and broadcast regularly ever since, and in 2005 established its own record label. These recordings are taken mainly from live concerts given by conductors including LPO Principal Conductors from Beecham and Boult, through Haitink, Solti and Tennstedt, to Masur and Jurowski. lpo.org.uk



KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI (b. 1933)

- 01 17:31 Horn Concerto 'Winterreise'
- 02 11:37 Adagio For Strings
- 03 40:25 Violin Concerto No. 1*
- 04 08:56 Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima

KRZYSZTOF PENDERECKI *conductor*

MICHAŁ DWORZYŃSKI *conductor**

BARNABÁS KELEMEN *violin*

RADOVAN VLATKOVIĆ *horn*

LONDON PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Vesselin Gellev *leader**

Eugene Tichindeleanu *guest leader*

Recorded live at Southbank Centre's **ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL**, London