

The Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra
William Schrickel, Music Director

Sunday, May 15, 2016 – 4:00 PM
St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Mahtomedi, Minnesota

William Schrickel, conductor
R. Douglas Wright, trombone
Polina Nazaykinskaya, composer
Kathrine Handford, organ

Program

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Capriccio Italien, op. 45

Polina Nazaykinskaya

Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra:
In Memoriam Gustavo de Campos Cassemiro

I. Adagio Fragile

II. Inevitable Eclipse

III. Silver Awakening

(The movements are played without pause.)

R. Douglas Wright, trombone

Intermission

Félix Alexandre Guilmant

Symphony No. 2 for Organ and Orchestra

I. Introduction et Allegro risoluto

II. Adagio con affeto

III. Scherzo: Allegro vivace

IV. Andante sostenuto

V. Intermède et Allegro con brio

(Movements IV and V are played without pause.)

Kathrine Handford, organ

Program Notes

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) traveled on holiday from Russia to Rome with his brother, Modest, in December of 1879. They stayed at the Hotel Costanzi, which was situated near a military barracks. In addition to enjoying the festivities of Rome during the pre-Christmas carnival season, Tchaikovsky practiced Bach on the piano he had delivered to his room, and he continued his study of English. Within two weeks of his arrival in Rome, he started sketching out musical ideas for what he then called an “Italian fantasia,” incorporating Italian street songs he heard during the carnival, a bugle call sounding each day from the nearby barracks, and folk songs compiled both from performances he heard while exploring Rome as well as a written anthology of Italian folk tunes.

Near the end of January, Tchaikovsky composed what we now know as his *Capriccio Italien* in about a week, and he completed the orchestration four months later. The work was successfully premiered in Moscow on December 18, 1880, and received a repeat performance a few weeks later. Opening with a resounding fanfare based on the bugle call Tchaikovsky heard from his hotel, the *Capriccio* wends its way through a series of Italian tunes, dances and a march on a path to its breathless conclusion based on *Cicuzza*, a well-known tarantella still popular today.

Polina Nazaykinskaya (b. 1987) is currently finishing her doctoral degree in composition at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York, where she studies with Tania León. The Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra and William Schrickel have performed several of her works in recent years, and the MSO is honored to have commissioned her Symphony No. 1 (*April Song*), a work that will receive its world premiere next season on April 2, 2017 at Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis.

Born in Togliatti, an industrial city on the Volga River in Russia, Nazaykinskaya studied piano, violin and flute as a child, and she entered the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory as a teenager, focusing on violin and composition. She competed a master’s degree in composition and theory and earned an artist diploma in composition at Yale University, where she studied with Christopher Theofanidis and Ezra Laderman. Her music has been performed by the Minnesota Orchestra, Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Yale

Philharmonia Orchestra, Russian National Orchestra and the U.S. Army Orchestra, and she has recently won the Charles Ives Scholarship at The American Academy of Art and Letters as well as a Paul and Daisy Soros Fellowship.

Nazaykinskaya composed her Concerto for Trombone and Orchestra: *In Memoriam Gustavo de Campos Casseiro* in 2014, and it was premiered on February 12, 2015 by trombonist Ben McIlwain and the University of Southern Mississippi Symphony Orchestra under the composer's baton. The composer will discuss the piece prior to this afternoon's performance.

Félix Alexandre Guilmant (1837-1911) was born in Boulogne-sur-Mer in northwest France. He played violin, piano and organ as a young boy, initially studying organ with his father, who was the organist at the Church of St. Nicholas. Guilmant moved to Brussels in 1860 to study with Jacques-Nicolas Lemmens. Guilmant was one of several organists who played at the inauguration of the organ of Paris' Notre-Dame Cathedral in 1868, and he became the organist at Saint-Trinité in Paris in 1870, an appointment he held for thirty years. He toured to the United States three different times, the last being an extended trip in 1904 when he played 40 concerts consisting of 40 entirely different programs at the St. Louis World's Fair.

Guilmant's Symphony No. 2 for Organ and Orchestra, a transcription of his Organ Sonata No. 8, was composed in 1906. More akin to a suite than a traditional symphony, the work was composed to show off the myriad sound possibilities of the organ as well as the soloist's virtuosity. The first movement is the longest and most "symphonic" of the piece, opening with a slow introduction and featuring a theme initially played by the cellos and basses that segues into a traditional sonata-form development. The movement closes with a triumphant full-orchestra restatement of the introduction's original "low string" theme. Organ and orchestra alternate taking the lyrical lead in the slow second movement. The scherzo is almost purely an orchestral showpiece, complete with two contrasting trio sections. The organist plays only a few bass notes on the pedal manual in the second trio. The organ reasserts itself in the songful, slow fourth movement, with the orchestra providing occasional musical reinforcement. Quiet, room-rumblingly low pedal notes link directly to the fifth movement, which starts with harmonically ambiguous horns and strings before launching into a boisterously fugal finale.