

## Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840 – 1893)

Vic	olin Concerto in D, Op. 35	
1	Allegro moderato	18. 05
2	Canzonetta (Andante)	6. 44
3	Finale (Allegro vivacissimo)	10. 04
	rénade mélancolique, Op. 26 violin and orchestra	
4	Andante	9. 27
	lse – Scherzo, Op. 34	
5	Allegro (Tempo di Valse)	7. 46
	uvenir d'un lieu cher, Op. 42	
	violin and piano	Nan - History
6	Méditation	9. 17
7	Scherzo	3. 15
8	Mélodie	3. 22

Julia Fischer, violin Yakov Kreizberg, piano (6-8) Russian National Orchestra conducted by: Yakov Kreizberg (1-5)

Recording venues: DZZ Studio 5, Mossow (1-5), 4/2006
MCO Studio 5, Hilversum (6-8), 4/2006
Executive Producer: Job Maarse
Recording Producers: Job Maarse (1-5), Sebastian Stein (6-8)
Balance Engineers: Erdo Groot (1-5), Jean-Marie Geijsen(6-8)
Recording Engineer & Editor: Sebastian Stein

Total playing time: 68. 25

## Composing for pleasure

The solo violin did not occupy a L central position within the oeuvre of Peter Tchaikovsky (1840 - 1893). He was himself a pianist, and composed three piano concertos, as well as chamber music, operas and ballets. That probably explains why he composed no more than one violin concerto. Certainly, it was composed shortly after the most profound crisis in his personal life, i.e. his marriage to Antonia Milvukova in 1877: "The marriage ceremony had only just taken place, and I had been left alone with my wife, realizing that fate had linked us inseparably, when it suddenly came upon me that I did not feel even simple friendship for her - rather, an aversion in the truest sense of the word. Death seemed to me to be the only way out, yet I could not even contemplate suicide." Admittedly, his friends, such as Nikolai Kashkin, were aware of this personal disaster: "Tchaikovsky himself looked somewhat bewildered. did not say a word about this new situation during our conversations. and his marriage remained - as it did for his other friends - a mystery to

us." However, Tchaikovsky did not seem to change as far as the rest of the world was concerned. as endorsed by his colleague Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, who mentions the following in his autobiography My musical life: "After approximately 1876. Tchaikovsky - who was living in Moscow at the time - regularly visited our home about once or twice a year. Whenever he came to St. Petersburg, he enjoyed coming to see us. Usually, his visits took place on the days when our musical circle came together... In those davs as also later on, Tchaikovsky was an endearing person with whom to talk and, in the best sense of the word, a noble man". He reacted to his disappointment in the marriage with illness (gastritis, headaches, insomnia) and sought refuge in work: a hasty removal to St. Petersburg also helped him to overcome this "tense situation" as his friend Nikolai Kashkin later recalled

In order to convalesce, Peter Tchaikovsky went to the Swiss health resort Clarens on the shores of Lake Geneva: "One only realizes just how

powerful the love of one's friends is, when one is separated from them. I am now living in Switzerland, in the midst of breath-taking nature. If I had stayed in Moscow just one more day, I would have lost my mind, or drowned myself in the stinking waves of the Moskwa" March 1878 became a time of great inspiration for him. His interest in the violin was heightened by his study of Edouard Lalo's Symphonie espagnole, which encouraged him by its "freshness, lightness, unusual rhythms, marvellous and impressively harmonized melodies", so that composing came to mean the purest of pleasures to him, as he wrote to his patroness. Madame von Meck. Here for the first time, he devoted a great deal of time to the violin, supported by his former student, Josef Kotek - now in the role of mentor - who was visiting him: "Without him, I would never have been able to finish the Violin Concerto." He gave important advice with regard to violin technique, which Tchaikovsky took into account in the extremely difficult work - most

particularly in the variations of the caressing motif in the Allegro moderato. The Andante canzonetta has the effect of a love poem, thanks to its Russian-Italian sound, and the Finale with the noisy fanfare turns into a virtuoso capriccio of Russian gypsy music.

Tchaikovsky had intended to dedicate the Violin Concerto to the violinist Leopold Auer: however, the latter turned it down, and also declined to give the première planned in 1879 in St. Petersburg due to the extreme technical demands. Thus the performance of the Violin Concerto was delayed until Adolf Brodsky was prepared to play it at his début in Vienna in December 1881.

In Russia, Tchaikovsky's music met with a controversial reception, as he did not compose in a typically nationalistic style: western-European influences were clearly audible in his music. However, the same was the case in Vienna, where the influential critic Eduard Hanslick wrote the following about the Violin Concerto: "The Russian composer Tchaikovsky is certainly not an everyday talent: however, his talent is forced, that of an obsessive genius, indiscriminate

and tasteless. What we already know of him contains a rare mixture of originality and uncouthness, of fortunate ideas and despairing refinement. This is also the case with his latest, a lengthy and demanding violin concerto. (...) Here, the violin is not played, but thrown about, ripped to bits, beaten to within an inch of its life. I am not sure whether it would even be possible to play this outrageously difficult music." This review is more a testimony of his feelings of helplessness and ignorance in the face of new sound possibilities than a reliable assessment, for this brilliant violin concerto now occupies a firm position in the standard concert repertoire.

The Valse – Scherzo for Violin and Orchestra – an extremely difficult Allegro, which Tchaikovsky had written in 1877, as it were, as a prelude to his Violin Concerto – is a little-known piece. This furioso waltz is dedicated to Josef Kotek. From the original Andante of the Violin Concerto (which Tchaikovsky then replaced by the Canzonetta), the composer developed the piece "Méditation" in his work Souvenir d'un lieu cher (Souvenir of a beloved place, 1878), which contains two

other pieces: a "Scherzo" and a "Mélodie". This is a nostalgic work for violin and piano, the composition of which gave him little pleasure. The elegiac Sérénade mélancholique for violin and orchestra dating from 1875 is of greater importance: "Melancholic passion, hopeless yearning and bitter thoughts of death seem to us to be unreal, false, almost kitschy in the dragging waltz disguise. And vet the music of the Sérénade is so simple and natural, so vividly true to life," thus wrote Tchaikovsky's biographer Richard Stein about this music. Although it was dedicated to Leopold Auer, it was again Adolf Brodsky who gave the première on January 16, 1876 at the Russian Music Society in Moscow.

If one looks at the narrow window of time during which the works for solo violin were composed, i.e. between 1875 to 1878, one realizes that these compositions must have formed an outlet for certain feelings during a personal crisis. Yearning and melancholy dominate in this music,

which however also demonstrates the composer's ambition with regard to the technical level of the Violin Concerto and of the Valse – Scherzo. At least in the case of his Violin Concerto, Tchaikovsky successfully met the challenge of writing music for the violin which would survive the test of time.

Hans-Dieter Grünefeld English translation: Fiona J. Stroker-Gale

### Julia Fischer

Born in 1983 in Munich, Germany, Julia Fischer is among the top violin soloists performing for audiences around the globe. Reviewers have described her as "not a talent, but a full-fledged phenomenal violinist," have said "she takes your breath away," is "worthy of a hailstorm of superlatives," and has a "winning blend of steely assurance and unabashed lyricism".

Julia Fischer has worked with such internationally acclaimed conductors as Lorin Maazel, Christoph Eschenbach, Yehudi Menuhin, Giuseppe Sinopoli.

Bernhard Klee, Asher Fish, Marek Janowski, Jeffrey Tate, Simone Young, Herbert Blomstedt, Yakov Kreizberg, Rafael Frühbeck de Burgos, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, Neville Marriner, David Zinman, Michael Tilson Thomas, Mikhail Jurowski and with a variety of top German, American, British, Polish, French, Italian, Swiss, Dutch, Norwegian, Russian, Japanese, Czech and Slovakian orchestras, Julia Fischer has performed in most European countries, the United States, Brasil and Japan; in concerts broadcast on TV and radio in every major European country, as well as on many US, Japanese and Australian radio stations.

In 2003 Julia Fischer – already for six years present in US concert halls at that time – appeared with the New York Philharmonic unter the baton of Lorin Maazel playing the Sibelius Violin concerto in New York's Lincoln Center as well as the Mendelssohn Violin concerto in Vail, Colorado. Her 2003 Carnegie Hall debut received standing ovations for her performance of Brahms Double concerto with Lorin Maazel, Ha–Na Chang

and the Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra. Julia Fischer has been on orchestral tours with Neville Marriner and the Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Herbert Blomstedt and the Gewandhaus Orchestra, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and the Dresden Philharmonic.

Her chamber music partners include Christoph Eschenbach, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Daniel Müller-Schott, Tabea Zimmermann, Gustav Rivinius, Lars Vogt, Oliver Schnyder and Milana Chernyavska.

In fall 2004 the label PentaTone released Julia Fischer's first CD: Russian violin concertos with Yakov Kreizberg and the Russian National Orchestra. It received ravishing reviews, climbed into to the top five best-selling classical records in Germany within a few days and received an "Editor's Choice" from "Gramophone" in January 2005.

Julia Fischer began her studies before her fourth birthday, when she received her first violin lesson from Helge Thelen; a few months later she started studying the piano with her mother Viera Fischer. Julia Fischer began her formal violin education at the Leopold Mozart Conservatory in Augsburg,
under the tutelage of Lydia
Dubrowskaya. At the
age of nine Julia Fischer
was admitted to the Munich
Academy of Music, where
she continues to work with Ana
Chumachenco.

Among the most prestigious competitions that Julia Fischer has won are the International Yehudi Menuhin Violin Competition under Yehudi Menuhin's supervision, where she won both the first prize and the special prize for best Bach solo work performance in 1995 and the Eighth Eurovision Competition for Young Instrumentalists in 1996, which was broadcast in 22 countries from Lisbon. In 1997 Julia Fischer was awarded the "Prix d'Espoir" by the Foundation of European Industry.

Her active repertoire spans from Bach to Penderecki, from Vivaldi to Shostakovitch, containing over 40 works with orchestra and about 60 works of chamber music.

Julia Fischer's instrument is of Italian origin made by Jean Baptiste

(Giovanni Battista) Guadagnini in 1750.

www.juliafischer.com

## Yakov Kreizberg

The Russian-born American con-■ ductor Yakov Kreizberg currently holds the posts of Chief Conductor and Artistic Advisor of the both Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra Netherlands Chamber and the Orchestra, as well as Principal Guest Conductor of the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, From 1995 to 2000, he Principal Conductor Artistic Advisor of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. At the end of the 2000/01 season, he relinquished the post of Generalmusikdirector of the Komische Oper Berlin.

In demand across the globe, Yakov Kreizberg has conducted orchestras such as the Royal Concertgebouw, Leipzig Gewandhaus, Berlin Philharmonic, WDR Köln, NDR Hamburg, Staatskapelle Dresden, BBC Symphony, London Philharmonic, Philharmonia, Deutsches Sinfonie-

Orchester Berlin, Bayerische Rundfunk and the Zürich Tonhalle. He has also been a frequent guest at the BBC Proms.

Within North America, Yakov Kreizberg regularly works with prestigious orchestras, including the Philadelphia Orchestra (with which he toured the Americas in 2003), Pittsburgh Orchestra, Cincinnati Orchestra, and Minnesota Orchestra: he has also conducted the Los Angeles and New York Philharmonic Orchestras, and the Chicago and Boston Symphony Orchestras.

Forthcoming plans include a tour of Spain, Germany and Switzerland with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, the NHK Symphony and the Pacific Music Festival in Japan, London Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris and Munich Philharmonic.

As well as having recorded for Decca and Oehms Classics, Yakov Kreizberg's collaboration with PentaTone Classics and the Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra has been extremely successful—their fourth release, Tour de France, was issued in June 2005. Also with Pentatone Classics, Maestro

Kreizberg has recorded an award-winning disc with Julia Fischer and the Russian National Orchestra, whilst his first recording with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra, Bruckner's Symphony no. 7, has been nominated in two categories (including best orchestral performance) for the 2006 Grammy Awards.

Yakov Kreizberg established a fine reputation at the Komische Oper, Berlin in a wide variety of repertoire. Elsewhere, he has conducted for Canadian Opera, Lyric Opera of Chicago, English National Opera and, The Russian National Orchestra on a number of occasions, with the Glyndebourne Festival Opera. He has recently conducted lolanthe with the Netherlands Opera and will return in 2007/08 for Janácek's Katva Kabanova. As part of the 2004 Bregenz Festival, he conducted Kurt Weill's Der Protagonist and Royal Palace with the Vienna Symphony Orchestra. The year 2006 includes performances of Macbeth at the Royal Opera House

Born in St Petersburg, Yakov Kreizberg studied conducting privately with Ilya A. Musin (the renowned Professor of Conducting at the St. Petersburg Conservatory), before emi-

grating to the United States in 1976. There, he was awarded conducting fellowships at Tanglewood with Leonard Bernstein, Seiji Ozawa, Erich Leinsdorf, and at the Los Angeles Philharmonic Institute. In 1986, he won first prize in the Leopold Stokowski Conducting Competition in New York

www.yakovkreizberg.com

### Russian National Orchestra

A has been in demand throughout the music world ever since its 1990 Moscow première. Following the orchestra's 1996 début at the BBC Proms in London, the Evening Standard wrote: "They played with such captivating beauty that the audience gave an involuntary sigh of pleasure." In 2004, they were described as "a living symbol of the best in Russian art," (Miami Herald), and "as close to perfect as one could hope for," (Trinity Mirror).

The first Russian orchestra to perform at the Vatican and in Israel, the RNO maintains an active international tour schedule, appearing in Europe, Asia and the Americas. The orchestra is a frequent guest at major festivals, and since 1999 has given an annual concert series in the USA. Popular with radio audiences world-wide, RNO concerts are regularly aired by National Public Radio in the United States and the European Broadcasting Union.

Gramophone magazine called the first RNO CD (1991) "an aweinspiring experience; should human beings be able to play like this?", and listed it as the best recording of Tchaikovsky's Pathétique in history. Since then, the orchestra has made more than 50 recordings for Deutsche Grammophon and PentaTone Classics, with conductors who include RNO Founder and Artistic Director Mikhail Pletney, Vladimir Jurowski, Mstislav Rostropovich, Kent Nagano, Alexander Vedernikov and Paavo Berglund.

The orchestra signed a new multi-disc agreement with PentaTone Classics in 2003.

One of the first results of this collaboration

– a recording of Prokofiev's

Peter and the Wolf and Beintus' Wolf Tracks, conducted by Kent Nagano – was the winner of a 2004 Grammy Award, making the RNO the first Russian orchestra ever to win the recording industry's highest honour.

Unique among the principal Russian ensembles, the RNO is independent of the government and has developed its own path-breaking structure. Artistic policy is shaped and guided by the RNO Conductor Collegium, a group of internationally renowned conductors who share the podium leadership. Another RNO innovation is Cultural Allies, an ongoing programme encompassing exchanges between artists in Russia and the west, and the commissioning of new works.

The Russian National Orchestra is supported by private funding and is governed by a distinguished multinational board of trustees. Affiliated organizations include the Russian National Orchestra Trust (UK), the Russian Arts Foundation and American Council of the RNO. For more information on the Russian National Orchestra, please visit www.



Polyhymnia specialises in high-end recordings of acoustic music on location in concert halls, churches, and auditoriums around the world. It is one of the worldwide leaders in producing high-resolution surround sound recordings for SA-CD and DVD-Audio. Polyhymnia's engineers have years of experience recording the world's top classical artists, and are experts in working with these artist to achieve an audiophile sound and a perfect musical balance.

Most of Polyhymnia's recording equipment is built or substantially modified in-house. Particular emphasis is placed on the quality of the analogue signal path. For this reason, most of the electronics in the recording chain are designed and built in-house, including the microphone preamplifiers and the internal electronics of the microphones.

Polyhymnia International was founded in 1998 as a management buy-out by key personnel of the former Philips Classics Recording Center.

For more info: www.polyhymnia.nl

Polyhymnia ist eine Aufnahmefirma, die sich spezialisiert hat in der Einspielung hochwertiger musikalischer Darbietungen, realisiert vor Ort in Konzertsälen, Kirchen und Auditorien in aller Welt. Sie gehört zu den international führenden Herstellern von High-resolution Surroundaufnahmen für SA-CD und DVD-Audio. Die Polyhymnia-Toningenieure verfügen über eine jahrelange Erfahrung in der Zusammenarbeit mit weltberühmten Klassik-Künstlern und über ein technisches Können, das einen audiophilen Sound und eine perfekte musikalische Balance gewährleistet.

Die meisten von Polyhmynia verwendeten Aufnahmegeräte wurden im Eigenbau hergestellt bzw. substanziell modifiziert. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit gilt dabei der Qualität des Analogsignals. Aus diesem Grunde wird der Großteil der in der Aufnahmekette verwendeten Elektronik in eigener Regie entworfen und hergestellt, einschließlich der Mikrophon-Vorverstärker und der internen Elektronik der Mikrophone.

> Polyhymnia International wurde 1998 als Management-Buyout von leitenden Mitgliedern des ehemaligen Philips Classics Recording Centers gegründet. Mehr Infos unter: www.polyhymnia.nl

Polyhymnia est spécialisé dans l'enregistrement haut de gamme de musique acoustique dans des salles de concerts, églises et auditoriums du monde entier. Il est l'un des leaders mondiaux dans la production d'enregistrements surround haute résolution pour SA-CD et DVD-Audio. Les ingénieurs de Polyhymnia possèdent des années d'expérience dans l'enregistrement des plus grands artistes classiques internationaux. Travailler avec ces artistes pour obtenir un son audiophile et un équilibre musical parfaits fait partie de leurs nombreuses expertises.

La plupart du matériel d'enregistrement de Polyhymnia est construit ou considérablement modifié dans nos locaux. Nous mettons notamment l'accent sur la qualité du parcours du signal analogique. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous élaborons et construisons nous-mêmes la plupart du matériel électronique de la chaîne d'enregistrement, y compris préamplificateurs et électronique interne des microphones.

Polyhymnia International a été fondé en 1998 suite au rachat de l'ancien Philips Classics Recording Center par ses cadres.

Pour de plus amples informations : www.polyhymnia.nl

#### **Technical Information**

Recording facility:

Microphones:

Microphone pre-amps:

DSD recording. editing and mixing: Surround version:

Rowers & Wilkins

van den Hul'

Polyhymnia International BV

Neumann KM 130, Schoeps mk25, DPA 4006, with Polyhymnia microphone buffer electronics.

Custom build by Polyhymnia International BV and outputs directly connected to Meitner DSD AD converter.

Pyramix Virtual Studio by Merging Technologies

5.0

Monitored on B&W Nautilus loudspeakers.

Microphone, interconnect and loudspeaker cables by van den Hul.



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# AUDIO CD

#### Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840 - 1893) Violin Concerto in D. Op. 35

1 Allegro moderato

2 Canzonetta (Andante)

18, 05 6, 44

9.27

7.46

3 Finale (Allegro vivacissimo) 10.04

Sérénade mélancolique. for violin and orchestra 4 Andante

Valse - Scherzo, Op. 34

for violin and orchestra

5 Allegro (Tempo di Valse) Souvenir d'un lieu cher, Op. 42

for violin and piano

6 Méditation

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3, 22

Julia Fischer - violin Yakov Kreizberg – piano (6-8)

Russian National Orchestra conducted by: Yakov Kreizberg (1-5)

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For more info: www.pentatonemusic.com





Julia Fischer – RNO – Kreizber

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