

Atlanta Symphony Orchestra*A founding member of the Robert W. Woodruff Arts Center***ROBERT SPANO**, Music Director**DONALD RUNNICLES**, Principal Guest Conductor**DELTA CLASSICAL SERIES CONCERTS**

Thursday, Friday and Saturday, November 12, 13 and 14, 2009, at 8 p.m.

HANNU LINTU, Conductor
TAI MURRAY, Violin

PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY (1840-1893)

Suite from *Swan Lake*, Opus 20a (1877)I. *Scene: Moderato*II. *Valse: Intrada: Tempo di valse*III. *Dances des cygnes: Allegro moderato*IV. *Scène: Andante*V. *Danse hongroise (Czardas): Moderato assai*VI. *Scène finale: Allegro agitato*

ALEXANDER GLAZUNOV (1865-1936)

Violin Concerto in A minor, Opus 82 (1904)[*Moderato*][*Andante*][*Allegro*]

TAI MURRAY, Violin

INTERMISSION

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)

Symphony No. 1 in F Major, Opus 10 (1925)I. *Allegretto: Allegro non troppo*II. *Allegro*III. *Lento*IV. *Allegro molto*

“INSIDE THE MUSIC” preview of the concert, Thursday at 7 p.m.,
presented by Ken Meltzer, ASO Insider and Program Annotator.

The use of cameras or recording devices during the concert is strictly prohibited.

Atlanta Symphony Orchestra

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The ASO Chorus, which performed the Brahms Requiem in Symphony Hall, October 29-30, will perform the work with the Berlin Philharmonic in Berlin in December. This tour and the ongoing partnership between the ASO and the legendary Berlin Philharmonie is made possible through the generous support of Delta Air Lines, The Halle Foundation and Miss Alice Ann Hamilton in memory of Dr. Charles Hamilton.

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The Yamaha custom six-quarter tuba is a gift received by the ASO in honor of Principal Tuba player Michael Moore from The Antinori Foundation.

This performance is being recorded for broadcast at a later time.

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NOTES ON THE PROGRAM

By Ken Meltzer

Swan Lake, Suite, Opus 20a (1877)

PETER ILYICH TCHAIKOVSKY was born in Kamsko-Votkinsk, Russia, on May 7, 1840, and died in St. Petersburg, Russia, on November 6, 1893. The premiere of *Swan Lake* took place at the Bolshoi Theater in Moscow, Russia, on March 4, 1877. The *Swan Lake, Suite*, is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, two cornets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, cymbals, bass drum, tam-tam, snare drum, harp and strings. Approximate performance time of is twenty-seven minutes.

First ASO Classical Subscription Performances: January 6, 7 and 8, 1994, Heinz Wallberg, Conductor.

In June of 1875, Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky accepted an invitation from the manager of the Moscow Bolshoi Theater to compose a new ballet. It would be Tchaikovsky's first ballet score. In September of that year, Tchaikovsky reported to Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov: "I undertook this labour partly for the money (800 roubles) which I need, partly because I have long wanted to try my hand at this kind of music." Earlier correspondence from Tchaikovsky to his brother, Modeste, reveals that the composer had previously considered writing a ballet based upon the story of Cinderella. For reasons that are not entirely certain, Tchaikovsky abandoned that project.

Uncle Peter's ballet

Perhaps of even greater interest are accounts of an informal ballet written for the children of Tchaikovsky's sister. Nephew Yury Davidov offered the following history:

A celebrated event was the production by Peter Ilyich of a ballet in which my older sisters and Uncle Modeste participated. The ballet was created by Peter Ilyich, as was also the music, on the theme "The Lake of Swans." Of course this was not the ballet given on the stages now, but a children's one-act short ballet, although the principal theme — "The Song of the Swans" — was the same as now. Peter Ilyich in his later, large composition used the theme of the children's ballet of 1871.

The composer's niece, Anna Meck-Davidov, also recalled this children's ballet, although she placed 1867 as the date of the "production." While none of the music from that children's ballet has survived in its original form, scholars agree that the famous oboe melody in *Swan Lake*, associated with Odette and the swans, originated in the family *divertissement*.

Swan Lake received its premiere at the Bolshoi on March 4, 1877, in a benefit performance for ballerina Pelageya Karpakova, who danced the role of Odette. Historians have tended to characterize the opening night of *Swan Lake* as a disaster. And, indeed, there is much evidence that the ballet was presented in far from its best light. The costumes, scenery, and choreography of the financially strapped Bolshoi were sub-par, to say the least. There is also strong evidence that much of Tchaikovsky's music was cut, and that the Bolshoi even substituted music of other, lesser composers. There were some harsh comments from the

critics, but they seemed to be directed more toward the poor quality of the production and the choice of a German story line for a Russian ballet (the identity of the librettist is uncertain) than toward Tchaikovsky's music.

“Sore ears from the stormy ‘bravos’”

On the other hand, there is much to suggest that *Swan Lake* inspired greater initial favor with the public than has been traditionally acknowledged. The capacity audience on opening night demanded and received encores of at least two numbers. A critic reported: “the principal hero of the present performance is Mr. Tchaikovsky, who got a sore waist from bowing, and to this moment still has sore ears from the stormy ‘bravos’ with which his delighted public met him.” *Swan Lake* enjoyed an initial run of forty-one performances, far more than the norm for a new ballet at the Bolshoi. Three productions of the ballet were offered in Moscow over a period of six years, including the opening of the 1877 autumn season. Additionally, a number of benefit performances featured excerpts from *Swan Lake*.

Today, the status of *Swan Lake* as one of the masterpieces of ballet is unquestioned. The story of the tragic fate of the young lovers, Odette and Prince Siegfried, has true dramatic impact. The music displays Tchaikovsky's familiar gifts of unforgettable melody, rhythmic vitality and magical instrumental colors. The continued success in the concert hall of orchestral suites from *Swan Lake*, *Nutcracker* and *Sleeping Beauty* is further testimony to the richness of Tchaikovsky's conception.

This concert features the orchestral Suite from *Swan Lake*, as well as the ballet's concluding *Scene*.

The Story and the Music

The Suite opens with the introduction to Act II (**I. Scene: Moderato**), featuring the haunting oboe melody associated throughout the ballet with Odette and the swans.

The story of *Swan Lake* takes place in Germany. In the ballet's first act, everyone celebrates the coming of age of Prince Siegfried. A group of peasants entertain the Prince and his friends with a *Waltz* (**II. Valse: Intrada: Tempo di valse**). The Prince's mother enters and tells Siegfried that he must choose a wife at a grand ball that will take place the following day. As night falls, the Prince spies a flock of swans flying overhead. Siegfried grabs his crossbow and rushes after the swans.

Act II takes place that night in a mysterious forest where ruins are situated on the shore of a lake. A group of swans, led by one with a crown on its head, swims in the lake. Siegfried arrives. Just as the Prince draws his crossbow, the swans disappear into the ruins. A magical light glows and Odette, wearing a white dress and a crown studded with precious stones, descends the staircase. The beautiful young woman explains to the Prince that her stepmother, an evil sorceress, seeks to kill her. However, Odette is protected by the crown given by her kind grandfather. The crown's magical powers allow Odette to transform herself and her companions into swans. Odette further tells the Prince that she can be saved from the evil stepmother's curse if she weds. Odette and the Prince fall in love. The Suite includes two selections from Act II, the sprightly *Dance of the Swans* (**III. Dances des cygnes: Allegro**

moderato) and the beautiful *Scene (IV. Scène: Andante)* for Odette and the Prince, featuring gorgeous writing for the solo violin and cello.

Act III takes place the following day at the palace ball. Several young women dance for Siegfried, but the Prince is unable to choose a bride. Entertainment is provided in the form of several national dances, including a *Czardas (V. Danse hongroise: Moderato assai)*. The Prince mistakes another woman for Odette. When Odette hurries away, the Prince rushes out into the night to try to find his beloved.

The final Act returns to the setting of Act II, at nightfall. The Prince hurries to Odette and begs for forgiveness. Odette replies that all is over between them. Overcome with anger, the Prince seizes the crown from Odette's head and hurls it into the overflowing lake. The waters rise and envelop Odette and the Prince, who are finally united in death. The tempest subsides, and the swans reappear on the now peaceful moonlit lake (*VI. Scène finale: Allegro agitato*).

Violin Concerto in A minor, Opus 82 (1904)

ALEXANDER GLAZUNOV was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, on August 10, 1865, and died in Paris, France, on March 21, 1936. The first performance of the Violin Concerto took place in St. Petersburg on February 17, 1905, with Leopold Auer as soloist and the composer conducting. In addition to the solo violin, the Concerto is scored for piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, timpani, glockenspiel, triangle, cymbals, harp and strings. Approximate performance time is twenty-one minutes.

First ASO Classical Subscription Performance: March 15, 1955, Michael Rabin, Violin, Henry Sopkin, Conductor.

Most Recent ASO Classical Subscription Performances: March 11, 12 and 13, 1993, Dmitri Sitkovetsky, Violin, Yoel Levi, Conductor.

Alexander Glazunov

Alexander Glazunov started piano studies at the age of nine. By the age of eleven, he had begun composing. In 1879, Glazunov met Mily Balakirev, the founder of group of Russian nationalist composers known as “The Five” or “The Mighty Handful” (the other members included Alexander Borodin, César Cui, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and Modest Mussorgsky). Thanks to Balakirev, Glazunov began studies with Rimsky-Korsakov (1844-1908). The studies lasted only two years, but they formed the basis for a lasting friendship and Glazunov's lifelong veneration of the senior composer.

On March 13, 1882, the sixteen-year-old Alexander Glazunov enjoyed a tremendous success with the world premiere of his First Symphony, conducted by Balakirev in St. Petersburg. One individual who was greatly impressed by the Symphony was the Russian music publisher, Mitrofan Belyayev. Belyayev decided to further the careers of Russian composers through the establishment of the Russian Symphony Concerts in St. Petersburg and a music publishing concern in Leipzig.

The “Belyayev Circle,” which included such composers as Rimsky-Korsakov, Glazunov, Anatoly Lyadov, and many others, helped to bridge the Russian nationalist efforts of Balakirev’s “Mighty Handful” with Western music traditions. Indeed, Glazunov, who traveled extensively throughout Europe, is viewed as one of the composers who most successfully achieved this reconciliation and synthesis. Glazunov was a prolific composer, whose works include numerous symphonies and independent orchestral works, ballets, choral and solo vocal compositions, and several chamber pieces.

In addition to his success as a composer, Glazunov was a highly respected teacher. In 1899, he was appointed as a professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. In 1905, he was named the Director of the Conservatory, a position he held until 1928. Glazunov also took a great interest in conducting, although this was probably not his foremost talent (he led the world premiere of Sergei Rachmaninov’s First Symphony in St. Petersburg on March 15, 1897, an unmitigated disaster that plunged the young pianist/composer into a profound depression).

The Glazunov Violin Concerto

One of Glazunov’s most famous and performed works is the Violin Concerto, completed in 1904. Glazunov dedicated the Concerto to his colleague at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, the great Hungarian-born violinist, Leopold Auer (1845-1930). Auer was the violinist whom Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky wanted to premiere his great Violin Concerto (1878). However, according to Tchaikovsky, Auer rejected that work as “awkward to play.”

It appears that Auer may well have assisted Glazunov in the writing of the solo violin part for his Concerto. Auer gave the Concerto’s world premiere in St. Petersburg on February 17, 1905, with the composer on the podium. The work became an important part of the repertoire of such Auer students as Jascha Heifetz and Nathan Milstein. And for more than a century, the Glazunov Violin Concerto has maintained an important place in the concert hall, as well as the affection of virtuosos and audiences alike.

Musical Analysis

The Glazunov Violin Concerto is in a single continuous movement, containing three principal sections. The first (**Moderato**) opens with the briefest of orchestral introductions, followed by the soloist’s introduction of the broad, flowing first principal theme, marked “*dolce espressivo*.” Some wide-ranging flourishes by the soloist lead to his introduction of the tender second principal theme. A playful sequence for the soloist, followed by a more introspective episode, serves as a bridge to the Concerto’s second principal section (**Andante**). The soloist plays a theme (*dolce espressivo*) that begins in the depths of the instrument’s range. The theme is, in fact, related to the one that opened the Concerto. The *Andante*, the longest of the Concerto’s three sections, serves as both the Concerto’s slow movement and a development and varied recapitulation of the principal thematic material. A lengthy cadenza for the soloist resolves to jaunty trumpet fanfares in 6/8 time, repeated by the soloist (**Allegro**). This is the central theme of the Concerto’s equivalent of a *rondo* finale, as the fanfare melody alternating with various episodes. High spirits predominate, as do virtuoso opportunities for the soloist, right to the Concerto’s thrilling final bars.

Symphony No. 1 in F Minor, Opus 10 (1925)

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH was born in St. Petersburg, Russia, on September 25, 1906, and died in Moscow, Russia, on August 9, 1975. The first performance of the Symphony No. 1 took place in Leningrad (St. Petersburg) on May 12, 1926, with Nicokai Malko conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic. The Symphony No. 1 is scored for two piccolos, three flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, four horns, two trumpets, alto trumpet in F, three trombones, tuba, timpani, triangle, snare drum, cymbals, bass drum, tam-tam, bells, piano and strings. Approximate performance time is thirty-two minutes.

First ASO Classical Subscription Performance: January 15, 1952, Henry Sopkin, Conductor

Most Recent ASO Classical Subscription Performances: October 15, 17 and 18, 1981, Louis Lane, Conductor.

“A new page in the history of music”

Dmitri Shostakovich was nineteen years old when, in December of 1925, he completed his First Symphony. At the time, Shostakovich was studying composition with Maximilian Steinberg at the Leningrad (St. Petersburg) Conservatory of Music. The Conservatory’s Director, Alexander Glazunov (see, Violin Concerto, above), wrote in his examination references: “Shostakovich, Dmitry. Professor Steinberg’s class of the theory of composition. Much fantasy and inventiveness. Currently in a period of quests.”

The First Symphony was Shostakovich’s graduation piece from the Conservatory. The work received its premiere on May 12, 1926, with Nikolai Malko conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic. Alexander Glazunov was in the audience, smiling and applauding the success of his pupil. In a letter to a friend, Shostakovich’s mother, Sonya, provided this glowing account of the premiere:

At half past eight in the evening we dressed and went to the Philharmonic. By nine o’clock the concert hall was filled. What I felt when Malko came out on the stage and picked up his baton would be hard to describe to you, my dear ... I can only say that even a great happiness is sometimes hard to live through ...

All went more than brilliantly — a splendid orchestra and magnificent execution! But the greatest success went to Mitya (Shostakovich). The audience listened with enthusiasm and the scherzo had to be played twice. At the end Mitya was called to the stage over and over again. When our handsome young composer appeared, looking almost like a little boy, the enthusiasm turned into one long thunderous ovation. He came to take his bows, sometimes with Malko, sometimes alone.

After the concert, Nikolai Malko wrote: “I have the feeling that I have learned a new page in the history of music and met a new great composer.” And it was not long before audiences throughout the world became familiar with this brilliant young talent. In November of 1927, Bruno Walter led the Berlin Philharmonic in a performance of the Shostakovich First. Leopold Stokowski conducted the Philadelphia Orchestra in the work’s US premiere in 1928.

In the audience for the Philadelphia performance was the composer's aunt, Nadezhda Galli-Shohat. She provided an interesting footnote to the history of the Shostakovich First by observing that much of the music in the Symphony had originally appeared in previous works by the young composer, including pieces based upon the fable of the grasshopper and the aunt, and Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid*.

The Shostakovich First has remained one of the composer's most popular Symphonies. It is a remarkably mature and accomplished work that demonstrates a mastery of orchestral sonorities, dramatic contrast, and the creation and manipulation of compelling thematic material. Also evident is the composer's wry and often biting sense of humor. All of these qualities make the Shostakovich First a worthy and representative introduction to the unique and remarkable achievements of perhaps the 20th century's greatest symphonist.

Musical Analysis

I. *Allegretto: Allegro non troppo* — The opening movement begins with a dialogue between the (muted) trumpet and bassoon, foreshadowing much of the important thematic material for the entire Symphony. The rather macabre introduction proceeds in fits and starts, until finally resolving to the principal *Allegro non troppo*, and the solo clarinet's presentation of an angular, jaunty march tune. The theme is soon taken up by the violins and later, the winds. Pizzicato strings accompany the second principal theme, a beautiful, flowing melody, initially played by the solo flute. Once again, the theme travels throughout the orchestra. A solo violin quietly launches the development section, which soon builds to an imposing proclamation, with the opening march theme predominating. A recapitulation of the principal themes also builds to a powerful statement, but the mood of the opening introduction returns to bring the first movement to a *pianissimo* close.

II. *Allegro* — The second-movement scherzo was the portion of the Symphony encored at the work's premiere. The brief movement opens with a lumbering introduction by the cellos and basses, a prelude to the introduction of the principal scherzo theme by the solo clarinet. The scherzo proceeds with tremendous momentum and energy before yielding to a serene central episode (*Meno mosso*), whose chorale-like principal theme is first played by the flutes. The opening scherzo returns, with the piano taking on an even more prominent role than in the initial presentation. The scherzo and *Meno mosso* themes combine for a stunning *fff* outburst, capped by three harsh chords on the piano. By contrast, the closing measures are hushed and mysterious, resolving to a pizzicato chord.

III. *Lento* — The Symphony's slow movement begins with a solo oboe playing a flowing, *espressivo* melody, related to the march theme introduced by the clarinet in the opening movement. The music builds to a powerful orchestral statement, punctuated by brass fanfares. The oboe introduces another theme (*Largo*), notable for its dotted rhythms and evocation of a funeral march. This theme also builds to a fearsome proclamation. The two themes return (along with the fanfare motif), as the slow movement appears to be leading to a peaceful resolution. But a roll of the snare drum heralds the finale, which follows without pause.

IV. *Allegro molto* — The finale's slow introduction (*Lento*) recalls thematic material from previous movements that will be further developed in the finale. The solo clarinet introduces the finale's first principal theme (*Allegro molto*), an agitated, chromatic melody. The music hurtles forward, leading to a blazing presentation by the winds and strings of the second principal theme, in turn related to the funeral march of the preceding *Lento*. A solo violin inaugurates an extended, serene treatment of the second theme (*Meno mosso*). An agitated development of the two themes (*Allegro molto*) shatters the momentary repose. The music builds to a *fff* explosion, capped by the timpani's threefold invocation of the *Lento*'s trumpet fanfares. A final slow episode (*Largo*) opens with the solo muted cello's poignant restatement of the finale's second theme. The music builds inexorably to the Symphony's triumphant final bars (*Presto*), based upon the timpani-fanfare motif.

HANNU LINTU, Conductor

Born in Finland, Hannu Lintu began his musical studies with the cello and piano at the Sibelius Academy before moving on to conducting with Jorma Panula. He participated in master classes with Myung Whun Chung at the Accademia Chigiana in Italy and, in 1994, won the Nordic Conducting Competition in Bergen.

Lintu assumed the position of artistic director and Chief Conductor of the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra in September 2009. Previously, he held Artistic Director positions with the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra (2002-2005) and the Turku Philharmonic Orchestra (1998-2001). He is a regular guest conductor of the Finish Radio Symphony and the Avanti! Chamber Orchestra in Finland, where he was artistic director of their 2005 Summer Sounds Festival.

Working extensively across the world, Lintu has made recent European appearances with the Deutsches Symphonie Orchester Berlin, Berlin Radio Symphony Orchestra, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Orchestre National de Belgique, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Barcelona Symphony Orchestra, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and regularly conducts all the major orchestras in his native Finland. Outside Europe, he has recently worked with the Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony, Pittsburgh Symphony, Houston Symphony, Sydney Symphony and Malaysian Philharmonic Orchestras. Festival appearances include the Berliner Festspiele, Golden Autumn Festival in Beijing, Flanders Festival and the Adelaide Festival.

Lintu has conducted a number of opera productions with the Finnish National Opera including Wagner's *Parsifal* directed by Harry Kupfer, Bizet's *Carmen*, Aulis Sallinen's *King Lear*, Kalevi Aho's *Before we are all Drowned* and most recently a new opera by Mikko Heiniö, *The Snake's Moment*. Elsewhere, he has conducted a concert performance of *Gianni Schicchi* at the Grant Park Festival in Chicago, recorded Tauno Pyllkanen's opera *Mare and her Son* with Estonian National Opera and conducted *Magic Flute* for Savonlinna Opera.



Hannu Lintu

Forthcoming highlights include performances with Ensemble Intercontemporain, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Atlanta Symphony, Baltimore Symphony, Houston Symphony, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Dresden Philharmonic, RTVE Madrid, Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony, Hong Kong Philharmonic and Royal Flemish Philharmonic.

Amongst his recordings, Lintu has released CDs of works by Rautavaara, Saariaho and Luca Francesconi with Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Avanti! Chamber Orchestra, Finnish Radio Symphony and Danish National Radio Symphony for Ondine and Naxos. He made two recordings with the Helsingborg Symphony Orchestra for Danacord: *The Sound of Shakespeare* and Shostakovich piano concertos (with pianist Oleg Marshev). Recent releases include works by the Finnish composer Jouni Kaipainen with the Tampere Philharmonic Orchestra for *Ondine* and works by Schumann, Dietrich, Gernsheim and Volkmann on Hyperion with the Berlin Rundfunk Sinfonieorchester.

TAI MURRAY, Violin

Aclaimed as “superb” by The New York Times, 26-year-old violinist Tai Murray is a rising star of her generation, increasingly in demand for both recitals and orchestral engagements. She has performed on the stages of Berlin’s Konzerthaus, Chicago’s Orchestra Hall, Copenhagen’s Tivoli Gardens, Shanghai’s Concert Hall and New York’s Carnegie Hall, and has collaborated with a wide range of conductors and instrumentalists including Marin Alsop, Richard Goode, Alan Gilbert, Jaime Laredo, Dmitry Sitkovetsky and Mitsuko Uchida. During the 2008-09 season, she returned to the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra and will make debuts with the Shanghai Symphony, London’s BBC Symphony and the BBC Scottish Symphony orchestras, among others.

Recent debuts include the Atlanta and Dallas symphony orchestras, the National Youth Orchestra of Venezuela and the Danish National Symphony Orchestra as well as re-engagements with the Chicago, St. Louis and Baltimore symphony orchestras.

Ms. Murray is also an avid recitalist having performed programs in Boston, Chicago, La Jolla, Los Angeles, New Orleans and Philadelphia with pianist Gilles Vonsattel. She returns this season to Philadelphia in collaboration with pianist Lambert Orkis, presented by the Philadelphia Chamber Music Society.

A dedicated chamber musician, Ms. Murray is a member of the conductorless East Coast Chamber Orchestra (ECCO). She has been on tour numerous times with Musicians from Marlboro and was a member of Lincoln Center’s Chamber Music Society II (2004-06).

A native of Chicago, Ms. Murray studied with Yuval Yaron and Franco Gulli at Indiana University and Joel Smirnoff at The Juilliard School. Winner of an Avery Fisher Career Grant in 2004, Ms. Murray is currently a BBC New Generation Artist (2008-2010). She performs on a violin dated 2007, made for her by distinguished and extraordinary luthier, Mario Miralles.



Tai Murray