

THE LENTHALL CONCERTS
in association with
OXFORD CONTEMPORARY MUSIC

**The Studio for
New Music
Moscow**

**Burford School and Community College
Wednesday, May 22nd 2002**

THE 2002 THAMES VALLEY Young Musicians' Platform

The 2002 Platform is for **Instrumentalists** only. Applications are invited from soloists and small groups at the start of, or preparing for, a career in music. A shortlist will be prepared from written applications and audition tapes. Shortlisted applicants will be asked to give an audition before a panel of judges and an invited audience. Performers selected at the auditions will be invited to give a paid public performance, either solo or shared, in the region.

Entrants must have been born, educated, or be living or working in Oxfordshire or Berkshire, and must be between their 20th and 26th birthdays on 1st January 2002.

Further details and application forms available from:

The Oxfordshire Youth Music Trust
Kencot Lodge, Kencot,

Lechlade, Gloucestershire GL7 3QX

Telephone • 01367 860588 Fax • 01367 860765

e-mail • chrisapp@btconnect.com

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS:

10th June 2002

Promoted by the Oxfordshire Youth Music Trust



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THE LENTHALL CONCERT SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM will be held in the Community College on Wednesday August 7th
2002 at 7.30. All members are urged to attend.

Programme

Pathetic Trio [Parts I-II]

Mikhail Glinka

(1804-57)

Glinka, adopted as the father of the Russian national music tradition, is particularly renowned for his operas *A Life for the Tsar* (1836) and *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (1842). So perhaps it is unsurprising that his *Pathetic Trio* (1832) – originally written for piano, clarinet and bassoon – was composed during the composer's stay in Italy, where he met Donizetti and Bellini, using their themes in other chamber pieces at the time. Finding himself surrounded by the atmosphere of the Italian opera, Glinka strove to encapsulate the direct expressiveness of vocal melody in his instrumental writing. The Trio is extremely effective, easily accessible with its vivid emotions, and fascinating in its natural and beautiful movement of ideas.

Youth (1917) – UK premiere

Sergey Protopopov

(1893-1954)

Protopopov studied medicine at Moscow University before attending the Kiev Conservatory, where he studied with Boleslav Yavorsky, graduating in 1921. He then moved back to Moscow and became associated with the Association for Contemporary Music (ASM), gaining prominence in particular with his second and third piano sonatas. Growing criticism from proletarian culture organisations, tacitly if not openly supported by the State, forced composers and musicians away from more technically complex and experimental music, and Protopopov established a career as a music theorist, choral conductor and as a teacher at the Moscow Conservatory (1938-43). Little more is known of his life.

Almost all his works are based on or to some extent influenced by Yavorsky's theories, and stamped with the personality of Skryabin including permutations of an eight-note scale alternating tones and semi-tones, and dominant-type modes. Youth is one of Protopopov's earliest works, written before he joined the Conservatoire, but he obviously thought it merited more attention as he reworked it into a larger suite during 1917-26. The text is by Lipsky.

Meditation In The Japanese Garden Op.54

Elena Firsova

(b. 1950)

"This one-movement composition was written in March 1992 in Cambridge. It was commissioned by the famous Swiss flautist Aurele Nicolet. The main musical material has some links with one of the Songs of the Nightingale from my chamber opera *The Nightingale and the Rose* (1991), where the singer is accompanied by a

harp. The piano part therefore sometimes has a harp-like texture. The title was provoked by the combination of instruments, which, it seemed to me, links with the Japanese concept of beauty. It is also connected with the small Japanese garden in Dartington where I liked to be."

Elena Firsova began composing from the age of 12, and from 1970 studied at the Moscow Conservatory, writing with a prodigious talent. Her music was first performed abroad in 1979, and her first foreign commission (from the BBC) came in 1984. Within a few years, changes occurred internationally and personally, and not long after the travel barriers were removed, she and her husband, Dmitry Smirnov, left Moscow for London in April 1991 with their two young children. Both composers survived by writing music to commission (Firsova herself completing six works in 1991 alone) and by means of short-term residency invitations from Cambridge University and from Dartington College of Arts; they were attached to the music department at the University of Keele from 1993 to 1998 and in 1998 they became British citizens.

Spectrum of Spring Op. 96

"*Spectrum of Spring* was written especially for the Studio for New Music in 1996 at Keele (England). It is in one movement, about 10 minutes long, and I tried to express musically the mood, feelings and colours of springtime. The piece was completed in October, and when I listened to the tape of the first performance, I was almost convinced that if it is a spring, it is rather a spring in the light of autumn. The first performance took place on 10 January 1997 in Gent, with the Studio for New Music conducted by Igor Dronov."

Dmitry Smirnov belongs to the rich generation of Moscow composers who first came to prominence in the early 1970s, after studying with Sidel'nikov and Denisov at the Moscow Conservatoire and privately with the Webern pupil Herschkowitz. In 1973 he began work as a music editor for the state publishing-house, where he was able to use his position to arrange publication of music by composers he considered to be neglected or held back by officialdom or ideology.

His music first attracted particular attention outside the USSR in 1979, when, along with six others, as one of the so-called Khrennikov Seven, he was publicly rebuked by the First Secretary of the Composers' Union for allowing his music to reach the West without passing through official channels of selection and control. Unsurprisingly, this episode sharply increased foreign interest in his music, and with the political relaxations of the late Soviet period his works achieved frequent performances outside Russia. In 1991, together with his wife Elena Firsova and their two children, Smirnov emigrated to the UK.

The Soldier's Tale

Igor Stravinsky
(1882-1971)

In 1917 the Stravinsky family was virtually destitute. The war and the Russian revolution had cut Stravinsky off completely from his family's estate and he was receiving no royalties from his music. The novelist C.F. Ramuz, who found himself in a similar situation, proposed a solution: a traveling exhibition of a musical play, produced by the two men in collaboration. Stravinsky, who was desperate, and who had come to greatly esteem Ramuz as a personal friend (they had collaborated on the French translation of *Les Noces*), agreed readily to the plan. Ramuz, who was not a playwright, wrote his libretto as a story, to be narrated and acted along with the music.

Scene 1: A soldier, on his way home on leave is accosted by an old man (the devil in disguise) who attempts to push a book on him. The Soldier protests that he hasn't any money to buy the book. The old man assures him that the book will bring him wealth untold and that he will gladly exchange it for the Soldier's cheap old fiddle. Recognizing a good bargain, the Soldier agrees but soon finds he can't make head or tail of the book. The devil proposes a simple solution: come stay at my house for a few days (where I have good foods, cigars and drink) and you can teach me to play this fiddle while I teach you the ways of the book. The Soldier agrees and soon finds that the old man was as good as his word.

Scene 2: Satisfied, the Soldier finds himself back on the road, but as soon as he reaches his village, he discovers that he wasn't at the devil's house for just three days - three years have passed. His fiancée has married and has children, his friends and family run from him in horror, thinking that he is a ghost. Disgusted, and realising who the old man really is, he throws the book away, but the devil, disguised as a cattle merchant, appears and convinces him to take up the book again and make his fortune.

Scene 3: The Soldier is indeed wealthy, but all his wealth can't please him since he has lost the only things that matter: his family and his fiancée. The devil, this time disguised as an old woman, appears to sell him his fiddle. But when the Soldier finds he can no longer play it, he throws the fiddle away again and tears the book to shreds.

Scene 4: The Soldier comes to a town where the king's daughter is ill and a reward of the Princess's hand has been offered to whoever can cure her. A fellow soldier in a bar convinces the Soldier to give it a shot. The Soldier again meets the devil and they play cards. The Soldier, in the progress of the game, realises that the only way to win back his old life is to lose all his money to the devil. The devil falls defeated and the Soldier triumphantly reclaims his fiddle.

Scene 5: The Soldier finds he is able to cure the Princess of her illness with his music. At the close of the scene he makes the devil dance a jig to his tune.

Scene 6: The newlyweds are happy as they have never been. The Princess begs to be introduced to the Soldier's family, but the Soldier, who realizes that to leave the kingdom would put him again under the spell of the devil, refuses. But he can't resist the temptation of his wife's charms and so agrees. As they cross the frontier, the inevitable happens and the devil dances his triumphant dance.

The Soldier's Tale is probably best known in its 'concert suite' arrangement (1918).

Canon In Memoriam I. F. Stravinsky

This work, commissioned by the English journal Tempo in connection with Stravinsky's death, draws directly from Stravinsky's own practice of musical 'memoria' (to Rimsky-Korsakov, Dylan Thomas, John F Kennedy and Aldous Huxley), and initiated a whole series of similar works in Schnittke's creative output.

Schnittke's contribution to the genre focuses on a uniquely individual 10-note monogram theme formed from the 'musical letters' found in Stravinsky's first name, patronymic and surname (g, f, e, d, e flat, c, h (b), e flat, a, and e flat). He underlines the initial diatonic tetrachord (four-note chord) in this monogram - paying homage to the Russian accentuation in Stravinsky's musical language - and structures his entire work around the tenfold realisation of this series to create a continuous and symbolical intonation of the composer's name.

Significance is also attached to the slowly descending movement of the scale that forms the core of the series, symbolically associated during the Renaissance and Baroque with the allegorical sense of grief, of death, and of movement towards the earth. And yet the monogram does not appear in its most obvious guise until the end: thus, the entire canonical composition develops as a variation impulse to the theme.

Piano Trio No.1 in C minor

The Trio was written in Petrograd in 1923 while Shostakovich was still a student at the Conservatoire. Distinguished by its romantic and lyrical character, this work nevertheless projects the ideological theme of a person aspiring for high moral significance that would become the leading and ever-present motif in the composer's creative journey.

Quick Amokus (1997) – UK Premiere

Quick Amokus was written after a few years' experimentation in electroacoustic music. The introduction of computers and synthesizers provoked unexpected ideas, and new ways of notating and thinking about music. *Quick Amokus* may be seen in part as an attempt to realise 'computer experience' in an 'acoustic environment' which is fundamentally alien to it. It is a Dadaist and surrealist perspective of our time.

Vladimir Nikolayev has experimented with different genres within new classical, electroacoustic and theatrical music. Formally and motivically, his compositions are very strictly organised, whilst at the same time his music is often based on the mysterious transformations of noise into beautiful sounds, of simple verbal-syllabic combinations into something similar and yet approaching a new and beautiful language. The composer does not like to comment on his compositions because he believes his music speaks for itself: it is very warm, comfortable, vivid and easy to listen to.

Nikolayev is a laureate of the First International Witold Lutoslawsky Competition, Warsaw (1991), and received the First Prize Laureate of the Lili Boulanger Memorial Foundation (Boston, 1992). He is a regular participant in international festivals of contemporary music in Moscow and other cities in Russia as well as abroad.

Alfred Schnittke

(1934-98)

Studio for New Music

The Studio for New Music Ensemble, Russia's most active contemporary music group, was founded by composer Vladimir Tarnopolski and conductor Igor Dronov in 1993. The main aim of the ensemble is to integrate Russian music into contemporary Inter-European musical and cultural developments.

The Ensemble specialises in 20th century and contemporary music; among the vast repertoire of the Studio special attention is given to the Russian avant-garde of the 1920s as well as compositions by contemporary composers, written especially for the group. Another particular interest is given to all kinds of collaboration with young composers in competitions, workshops, masterclasses and various other forms.

Since its foundation, the ensemble has given over a hundred concerts, on a monthly basis, each time with new programmes; it has also taken part in numerous international festivals of contemporary music in Russia, the former Soviet Republics, France, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium and the Czech Republic. This is its first visit to the UK. The Ensemble has recorded works for various foundations and radio stations, and produced several CDs by Russian and foreign contemporary composers, including a series of CD-portraits by the most famous Russian contemporary composers on the Belgian label MEGADISC.

Studio for New Music is the resident ensemble of the Moscow Forum Festival of contemporary music, which is organised by the Centre for Contemporary Music of the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatoire. The ensemble has the exclusive right for Russian premieres of chamber works by some of the principal Russian composers, such as Aleksandr Vustin, Faradj Karajev, Vladimir Tarnopolski, Elena Rissova, and Dmitry Smirnov, as well as a number of the most interesting young and upcoming composers currently based in Russia.

Igor Dronov

Born in 1963, Igor Dronov graduated from the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatoire where he studied choral conducting with Professor Tevlin and orchestral conducting with Professor Kitaenko. From 1991 to 1996 he worked as a conductor at the Bolshoi Theatre, conducting performances of *La Traviata*, *Il Trovatore*, *Faust*, *Evgeny Onegin*, *Aleko* and *The Miserly Knight*. He also conducted symphony programmes with the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra.

In 1992 Igor was invited to become a Professor of Conducting at the Tchaikovsky Conservatoire, a position he continues to hold. He is the principal conductor of the Studio for New Music, with which he has recorded several CDs, and of the Moscow Forum Festival. He has also performed as a guest conductor in Austria, Belgium, the Vatican, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Romania, France, Switzerland, Taiwan, the Czech Republic, Finland and Portugal.

The Studio for New Music

Conductor: *Igor Dronov*

Artistic Director: *Vladimir Tarnopolsky*

The Studio for New Music is Russia's leading new music ensemble, with 19 players and a conductor who are on the staff, or are former postgraduates, of the Moscow Tchaikowsky Conservatoire. From Saturday 18th May to Saturday 25th they will be giving concerts in Oxford and other venues in the county.

Friday 24th May 8pm, Jacqueline du Pré Music Building, Oxford.

Chevengur: Post Soviet Music

Innermost Man (2002)(UK premiere)	<i>Dmitry Kourliandsky</i>
Chevengur's Songs (1992) (UK premiere)	<i>Alexandr Vustin</i>
Island of Silence (1999) (UK premiere)	<i>Alla Kesselman</i>
Get out (1995) (UK premiere)	<i>Nicolay Korndorf</i>
Symphony No.4-5	<i>Galina Ustvolskaya</i>
Letters without Words (2001) (UK premiere)	<i>Alexey Sioumak</i>
Chevengur (2001) (UK premiere)	<i>Vladimir Tarnopolski</i>

Saturday 25th May 8pm, St Peter's Church, Wallingford.

Pathetique Trio (parts 1-11)	<i>Glinka</i>
Youth	<i>Sergey Protopopov</i>
Formes en l'Air	<i>Arthur Lourié</i>
Overture on Jewish themes	<i>Prokofiev</i>
De Profundis	<i>Sofia Goubaidulina</i>
The Soldoer's Tale	<i>Stravinsky</i>
In Memoriam Stravinsky	<i>Schnittke</i>
Postludia (UK premiere)	<i>Faradj Karaev</i>

The Oxford performance will be recorded by BBC Radio 3. Transmission is scheduled for June 8th