



Wagner's
**Tristan
und Isolde**

4pm, Saturday 10 August
Auckland Town Hall

Conductor Giordano Bellincampi
Featuring Simon O'Neill as Tristan and Manuela Uhl as Isolde
with The New Zealand Opera Chorus

Tristan und Isolde is a searing portrait of agonised, unstoppable, uncontrollable desire that can end only in death. From its very first notes, Wagner reshaped music for ever. This is a performance not to be missed.

Duration: Approx. 5½ hours – three acts with one 30min interval and a 60min dinner break.



AUCKLAND
LIVE



Wagner Society
of New Zealand 

The New Zealand Herald
Premier Series

Auckland
Philharmonia

Totally Trumpet

🕒 7.30PM, THURSDAY 23 MAY



CONDUCTOR Lawrence Renes

TRUMPET Tine Thing Helseth

SMETANA *The Bartered Bride: Overture*

ALEKSANDRA PAKHMUTOVA Concerto for

Trumpet and Orchestra

PENDERECKI Trumpet Concertino

RACHMANINOV Symphony No.3



For artist biographies,
please visit our website

Programme Notes

Bedřich Smetana (1824-1884)

The Bartered Bride: Overture (1863)

DURATION: c.7'

Aleksandra Pakhmutova, Brought up to speak German when the Czech lands were still under the rule of the Habsburgs, Smetana was one of the educated Czech elite who sought to create a Czech artistic 'voice'. His music became, as one of his champions put it, "a star which leads us into the promised land of a sovereign, independent national culture".

Smetana's comic opera *Prodaná nevěsta* (the 'sold' bride, more usually translated into euphonious English as the 'bartered' bride) was written for a new Provisional Theatre in Prague, intended to prepare the way for the National Theatre. Smetana had received the sketch of a libretto in one act – in German – in July 1863. He wanted two acts and more detail. While waiting, he began composing, and so, unusually, wrote the dazzling overture before most of the rest of the music.

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Aleksandra Pakhmutova (b.1929)

Concerto for Trumpet and Orchestra
(1955 rev. 1978)

Australasian premiere

ONE SINGLE MOVEMENT

DURATION: c.13'

Aleksandra Pakhmutova, known for her tonal music in a wide variety of genres, is one of the most decorated Russian composers, having received awards both before and after the fall of the Soviet Union. Composed while she was a postgraduate at the Moscow Conservatory, Pakhmutova's trumpet concerto is one of the few works (apart from Shostakovich's) that have survived the post-Stalinist Soviet period of Russian music history. The trumpet concerto is in one movement but it references the rational tri-partite structure of a concerto: a slow introduction leads into a fast Allegro, a slow legato section, and fast finale. Pakhmutova draws together most of the popular styles of mid-century Soviet music here: the influence of Rachmaninov's long melodies, Prokofiev's brass writing, and Khachaturian's colourful harmonic and rhythmic style are especially apparent.

Krzysztof Penderecki (1933-2020)

Trumpet Concertino (2015)

Southern Hemisphere premiere

I. *Andante*

II. *Larghetto*

III. *Intermezzo*

IV. *Vivo ma non troppo*

DURATION: c.12'

This trumpet concertino was one of Penderecki's final compositions, coming at the end of a long and varied career. While still best known for his early works like the *Threnody for the Victims of Hiroshima* that experiments with extended instrumental techniques and intense sound fields, in the 1980s he turned to a neo-Romantic style where the orchestra is used more conventionally. While not always as arresting on a surface level as the experimental works (which Penderecki said he eventually found boring because there was nowhere further to go in terms of compositional technique), these later works demonstrate more rigour and a carefully worked out sense of drama and sometimes, as in this concertino, even a sense of fun.

Penderecki packs an extraordinary amount of music into this short piece. The first movement is a long trumpet fanfare punctuated by the orchestra. The slow second movement begins with a more lyrical melody (played on flugelhorn) that develops into something more intense. The short Intermezzo leads to an exciting fanfare-filled climax.

INTERVAL

Sergei Rachmaninov (1873-1943)

Symphony No.3 (1936 rev. 1938)

I. *Lento – Allegro moderato*

II. *Adagio ma non troppo*

– *Allegro vivace*

III. *Allegro*

DURATION: c.40'

After the Russian Revolution forced Rachmaninov into exile in the United States and Europe, he struggled somewhat as a composer; his music was seen by the various modernist camps as outdated and overly romantic, and despite the success of his virtuoso piano works he struggled to convince audiences of his musical identity. The Third Symphony, one of his longest works, was one of his most controversial pieces. Only modestly successful at its premiere in 1936 (conducted by Leopold Stokowski in Philadelphia), the symphony has since been re-examined as a finely crafted expression of nostalgia. The Third is notable in its combination of romanticism and modernism, unsettling for some in the 1930s but today a source of its attraction. Rachmaninov also shows himself a master of orchestration and melodic manipulation.

A slow Russian chant-like main theme begins the symphony and returns in each movement. While the musical material is all original, Rachmaninov refers to Russian styles of the previous century. The first movement's opening theme is similar to Mussorgsky's nationalist style and its second theme deploys Tchaikovsky's more Western-looking lyricism. The second movement combines the traditional slow movement and scherzo, folding them into each other; in the scherzo Rachmaninov seems to reference his younger contemporaries Prokofiev and Shostakovich in the rhythmically free and dissonant music. The third movement combines Russian-style dance rhythms with pastoral and military topics, along with a reference to the 'Dies Irae' plainchant (one of Rachmaninov's favourite motives) in a rousing finale.

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