then woodwind. The work's introduction is alluded to as the music grows restless, then the noble theme returns on brass and pizzicato strings on the way to a brief climax. As this dies down the insouciant theme reappears on strings, building to a resolute statement on woodwind and brass that suddenly recalls the noble theme then the first movement's main themes in hectic succession. Three timpani strokes usher in a soulful rendering of the work's introductory theme on strings: the repetition of its climactic motif leads to a lengthy coda in which the hymn-like theme is reiterated over the whole orchestra in a processional somewhere between the triumphal and the bombastic. Whether this apotheosis should be taken at other than face value is for each listener to decide.

Symphony No. 13 'Babi Yar', Op. 113 (1962)
(CD 10: 8.573218)

Vasily Petrenko: *There's an interesting relationship between this piece and Schoenberg's* A Survivor from Warsaw*, the same cast and interactive structure with narrator. I believe he knew the work. The end is very painful: in the poem* Career *the poet says I'm fulfilling my career by not doing it. The less attention you give to the formal, public part of your career, the better you will be remembered. That's why the final waltz leads us up to the stratosphere. He had confidence that when he died, he would be remembered, he knew he had not wasted his life.*

The *Thirteenth Symphony* followed on directly from its predecessor and has the consecutive opus number. Nor were any original compositions completed between them (an orchestration of Mussorgsky's song-cycle *Songs and Dances of Death* was undertaken during work on the symphony, but only finished afterwards), as though Shostakovich intended these two pieces to form a self-contained diptych that brought to a head his preoccupation with Russian issues over the twentieth century. 'The Year 1962' might have proved an equally apposite subtitle.

Publication on 19th September 1961 of Yevgeny Yevtushenko's poem *Babi Yar*, a forthright condemnation of anti-Semitism in Russia, marked the beginning of the end of that period in Soviet history known as 'the thaw' which took place under the presidency of Nikita Kruschev. Shostakovich was galvanized into action – completing his setting of the poem in piano score on 27th March 1962 with the full score on 21st April, and only then contacting the poet for his permission. Initially he envisaged this setting as a stand-alone piece, though on acquiring Yevtushenko's volume *A Wave of the Hand* he soon set to work on three further poems and subsequently requested a new poem from the author (*Fears*) as a symphonic conception fell into place. Despite a short stay in hospital, Shostakovich completed the work on 20th July 1962. During this period, moreover, the composer defended his decision to set so extensively a poet who was viewed with suspicion in cultural circles (much as Bob Dylan was to be by Western literati) – considering his veracity of expression to outweigh any shortcomings in technique.

Shostakovich first approached the Ukrainian bass Boris Gmyra to take on the première, but the latter refused after having consulted his local Communist Party leadership. Matters went little further while the composer attended a major retrospective of his work at the Edinburgh Festival in August, followed by such as Stravinsky's return to his homeland in October after some 45 years and then Shostakovich's only public appearance as a conductor (directing his *First Cello Concerto* at Gorky) in November. By this time, it had become clear that Yevgeny Mravinsky, who had undertaken the premières of almost all Shostakovich's symphonies since the *Fifth*, was unwilling to take on the new work. Stung by this rejection (reasons for which remain contested to this day), the composer approached Kirill Kondrashin – who had given the belated première of the *Fourth Symphony* and duly accepted with alacrity. Bass Viktor Nechipailo was engaged, but Kondrashin also coached Vitaly Gromadsky as 'replacement' – a precaution that proved invaluable when the former failed to appear for the dress rehearsal.

When it did go ahead, the première – in Moscow on 18th December 1962 with Gromadsky, basses of the Republican State and Gnessin Institute Choirs, and Kondrashin conducting the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra, with a repeat hearing two days later – was a resounding success. Soviet officialdom did its best to undermine the occasion by cancelling a televised transmission, then demanding changes to the text of the first movement – to underline that Russians and Ukrainians died alongside Jews at the Babi Yar ravine near Kiev – if further hearings were to take place. Despite misgivings, Shostakovich acquiesced to Yevtushenko's rewriting of eight lines, but he did not enter these changes (which caused minimal alteration to the music) in the score and almost all post-Soviet performances and recordings (including the present one) have gone back to the original text. The revision was first heard in Moscow on 10th and 11th February 1963, again conducted by Kondrashin, though not for two largely unheralded performances in Minsk – both conducted by Vitaly Katayev – during mid-May.

The original artists gave further performances in Moscow on 20th November 1965, in Gorky that December and at Novosibirsk in January 1966 but such hearings, while never prohibited, were not encouraged. Eugene Ormandy gave the American première in Philadelphia on 16th January 1970 with Tom Krause, the Mendelssohn Club of Philadelphia and the Philadelphia Orchestra, with the UK première in Liverpool on 14th September 1971 by John Shirley-Quirk, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Chorus and Orchestra under Charles Groves. Several early performances were later released on disc – including those given by Kondrashin in Moscow on 20th December 1962 and 20th November 1965, and, intriguingly, in an Italian translation conducted by Riccardo Muti in Rome on 31st January 1970 – with the first studio recording made in Moscow by Kondrashin in September 1965, followed by Ormandy in Philadelphia in January 1970, and André Previn in London in July 1979. Commercial recordings became more frequent as the Shostakovich discography expanded over the following two decades.

The *Thirteenth Symphony* is scored for bass soloist, a chorus of basses (between 40 and 100 voices), and an orchestra consisting of woodwind in threes (two flutes and one piccolo) with doublings, four horns, three each of trumpets and trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (four players) and strings (from 64 to 82 desks). The first movement is a predominantly slow yet deceptively rhapsodic design, and is followed by a scherzo; the final three movements play without pause so a progression from numbness, through volatility, to animation is perceived.

The first movement, *Babi Yar*, tells of prolonged anti-Semitism in Russia in the context of the atrocity committed against Jews by the Nazis at the eponymous ravine near Kiev in 1941. It opens with a stealthy theme on woodwind and muted trumpets, heard over pizzicato strings and bell strokes, which forms a 'motto' for the work overall. The chorus enters with a broad melody over lower strings that sets the scene, and which the bass continues with reference to the 'Dreyfus Case' – the music growing more venomous as he proceeds. After a brief repose, it becomes brazenly sardonic as bass and chorus recall the anti-semitic pogrom in Białystok, formerly part of the Russian Empire and today part of Poland, in June 1906, then ricocheting brass lead to a rapt restatement of the motto on strings and celesta. The bass now addresses the Russian people over pensive horns and woodwind, a recall of the sardonic music acting as the transition into his idealized evocation of Anne Frank ('I feel that I am Anne Frank, as tender as a shoot in April') against strings and celesta, summarily curtailed by the fateful 'arrival' of the chorus, then a brutal march-like passage that culminates in a crushing orchestral restatement of the motto. Dying away on percussion, this leaves the chorus and bass to recall the site of the massacre over sombre woodwind and brass, subsequently taking the music to an eloquent climax which pointedly equates anti-Semitism with Russianness. The tail-end of the motto then returns to bring about a wrathful conclusion.

The second movement, *Humour*, raises its subject to the level of an eternal freedom-fighter against institutions, whether social, political or religious. Ironic woodwind and string chords launch the strutting main theme, bass and chorus telling of humour's exploits over an active orchestral backing. This only briefly loses impetus when

his death is solemnly announced – after which, mordant woodwind recollect the motto from the previous movement, before bass and chorus initiate a hectic dance that moves from strings to brass. The bass now darkly foretells of humour's imminent execution, amid violent orchestral outbursts, but his last-minute survival is signalled by the return of the initial jollity to thunderous orchestral approval. Bass and chorus apostrophise him in deadpan terms, the orchestra finally emerging for a dashing recall of the earlier dance then an exhilarating close.

The third movement, *In the Store*, recounts the daily drudgery of Russian women as they set about their routine. Lower strings slowly unfold the sombre theme which becomes more defined as it rises upwards. The bass sets a scene whose dreariness is echoed by the chorus, an aimless percussion motif trailing in its wake. This latter alternates with pizzicato strings as textures become more varied, bass and chorus amply reinforcing the eloquence of the poet's sentiments, before the theme migrates from lower woodwind to upper strings in an interlude of magical pathos. The bass re-enters as tension mounts and a vast climax is reached – bass and chorus joining in condemnation of those who would not accord the women their dignity, against stark tattoos on percussion and a final outburst that culminates in slashing gestures from strings and percussion. Over fateful pizzicato the bass intones his enduring shame, his words trailing off against resonant choral harmonies (the only time in the work when voices are so divided), then lower strings recall the main theme as the music returns to the depths.

The fourth movement, *Fears*, follows on immediately with solo tuba sounding baleful over sepulchral strings. The chorus enters hesitantly with its guarded recognition of a more open society, the bass responding with his defiant recollection of more troubled times (though whether Tsarist or Soviet is left pointedly unanswered), while a menacing rhythmic figure on trumpets and flutes keeps the atmosphere tense. Twice it provokes a brief outburst, as lower strings continue their restless searching and the bass evokes images of informers and midnight visits. A change of perspective sees the re-entry of the chorus in a stealthy march whose folk-like theme is echoed by bass as the music accrues momentum over undulating strings with shrill cries on woodwind and percussion. His warning that fears inhibit the dissemination of truth provokes a surging climax, culminating in a glowering transformation of the work's opening theme. This subsides to leave the chorus reiterating its initial words, and the bass solemnly to bear witness, before the music gradually dies down against ominous tolling from horns and harp.

The fifth movement, *A Career*, radically changes the expression with its airborne theme for flutes which draws in other woodwind then strings as its radiance spreads. A suave refrain on strings precedes a laconic bassoon figure over which bass and chorus agilely alternate in their telling of Galileo's humiliation by those with more to lose and whom time has condemned to oblivion. Ironic interjections from woodwind and brass provoke a breezy climax, before two reappearances of the suave refrain enclose a pizzicato version of the flutes' theme. Bass and chorus widen their consideration of integrity to include other epoch-making figures (note the acidic pun on 'Tolstoy'), the strings unfolding a vigorous fugue on the bassoon figure toward a strident climax that subsides on lower strings. The mood quietens as bass and chorus recall those whose careers proved life-changing, the former continuing over strings and lower woodwind in his plea for others to follow their example. Solo strings eloquently reprise the flute theme, then celesta adding its spectral presence as the music fades with a final chime on bells.

Shostakovich spoke of having recited this latter poem as though an article of faith. Clearly its message struck a resonance with the composer, whose own career had often been blighted by intrigue and compromise: encouraging him, perhaps, to pursue his career by not pursuing it.

As might be expected, the work was accorded a glowing reception from Soviet officialdom, with Shostakovich (having only recently joined the Communist party) personally invited to the 22nd Party Congress towards the end of October 1961. There the symphony was hailed as a worthy successor to its predecessor, though critical perception of it as being more generalized and impersonal – despite its overtly Russian qualities – indicated a growing conviction that the work was, as Shostakovich had himself confided, not among his finest. Despite a high-profile launch, it was not awarded a Lenin Prize and performances in the West were notably fewer than with most previous Shostakovich symphonies. Mravinsky and the Leningrad Philharmonic set down the first recording in October 1961, to be followed by Georges Prêtre with the Philharmonia Orchestra in March 1963 and Ogan Duryan with the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra in October 1967, though subsequent recordings are comparatively few and have tended to appear within complete symphonic cycles rather than as stand-alone releases.

The *Twelfth Symphony* (which is dedicated to the memory of Lenin) is scored for woodwind in threes, four horns, three each of trumpets and trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (four players) and strings. The four movements, playing continuously, chart the Bolshevik struggle in what, paradoxically perhaps, is Shostakovich's closest adherence to the 'classical' symphony.

The first movement, *Revolutionary Petrograd*, harnesses its depiction of social upheaval to an unusually orthodox (for this composer) handling of sonata form. A solemn introduction on lower strings, joined by full strings and brass, is notable for its initial four notes and four-times repeated climactic motif. Percussion launches the energetic first theme on woodwind, joined by strings then brass as it hastens towards a forceful climax; subsiding to reveal the hymn-like second theme on lower strings which gradually gains in ardour to culminate in its resplendent statement on full orchestra. A tensile development centres on the first theme discussed impulsively by woodwind and strings, brass and percussion then propelling the music to a seething climax where all the themes are climactically juxtaposed. From here the second theme is expressively recalled by strings then woodwind, before the introductory theme forcefully re-emerges on brass. Pizzicato strings and side drum, previously in evidence, persist through a wistful recollection of the initial motif on unison woodwind, before reaching an expectant pause.

The second movement, *Razliv* (the village where Lenin went into hiding prior to his return to Petrograd), opens with a sombre rhythmic idea on lower strings over which horns unwind a brooding, folk-like theme. This is rounded-off by an incantatory brass refrain, the rhythmic idea moves to upper strings and woodwind repeat the refrain with the theme now heard on flutes and clarinets. Violins take up the rhythmic idea as it and the theme are combined in eloquent polyphony. Brass then intone the refrain, with reference to the hymn-like theme from the previous movement, then the central section commences with a theme of real pathos on flutes against calmly undulating strings, with equally poetic responses from the other woodwind. At length the refrain reappears on woodwind, before the rhythmic idea on clarinet and pizzicato strings leads into a baleful restatement of the main theme on trombones against tremolo strings and muted brass. Brass intone the refrain one last time, then elements from the remaining ideas are dissolved via a hushed coda in which pizzicato strings have the final word.

The third movement, *Aurora* (the battleship whose shelling of the Winter Palace in Petrograd set the Bolshevik Revolution in motion), opens with an insistent rhythm on timpani then pizzicato strings which soon emerges as a theme on woodwind and strings. This subsides into the hymn-like theme on low brass against pulsating strings and glinting woodwind, building toward its blazing orchestral restatement, followed by an energetic recall of the preceding theme on brass and percussion.

The fourth movement, *Dawn of Humanity*, sets off with a noble theme for horns and strings, taken up by woodwind then full orchestra, before portentous brass chords lead into an almost insouciant theme on strings

that places everything heard hitherto into an eloquent new perspective. Stark chords then initiate the coda, the latter melody building up to a peroration in which the 'alarm' of bell strokes (derived from the opening motto) sends out a tonally ambivalent yet emotionally unequivocal message.

Symphony No. 12 'The Year 1917', Op. 112 (1961) (CD 5: 8.572658)

Vasily Petrenko: *The* Twelfth *is probably the most cryptic of them all, and a big discovery for me. It's a hugely powerful piece, especially if you understand what's behind it. He makes use of the traditional* People of Russia *from Mussorgsky. There's a three-note theme representing the people, while Lenin is heard in a two-note theme (I subscribe to the view that he denotes a brutal leader or anti-human force in two note themes, and "humanity" in three-note ones). You can hear how Lenin moves the people towards catastrophe in the first movement. He then follows Lenin to Razliv in Finland, where he reflects on his strategy. We hear a theme from Sibelius's* Lemminkäinen in Tuonela *which deals with the hero's death, when he is cut into pieces and thrown in a river – later his mother pulls out the pieces and only by her tears is he restored again. The message is clear. It's one of the most clever calculations he made: firstly, to quote Sibelius – the necessary people would understand the message – and to put in the revolutionary songs as a cover. You can sense how songs start with a clear intention but are altered and warped.*

In the final part, "the dawn of humanity", he was raising a question for himself: if the 1905 revolution had been successful, would a parliamentary regime have been established?

The four years between the *Eleventh* and *Twelfth Symphonies* yielded a number of pieces, ranging from modest undertakings such as *Two Russian Folksong Adaptations* and the orchestral prelude *Novorossiisk Chimes* to the musical comedy *Moscow, Cheryomushki* and an orchestration of Mussorgsky's unfinished opera *Khovanshchina* that has served as the basis for most subsequent productions. In addition there was the song-cycle *Satires (Pictures of the Past)* to verse by Sasha Chyorny and a score for Leo Arnshtam's Dresden film *Five Days – Five Nights* [the suite is on 8.553299]. They also brought forth the *First Cello Concerto* [8.550813], written for Mstislav Rostropovich and a work ranging from bracing irony to heartfelt eloquence, as well as the *Seventh* and *Eighth String Quartets* [8.550972 and 8.550973], the former dedicated to the memory of Shostakovich's first wife Nina and the shortest as well as most emotionally inscrutable of the cycle, and the latter seemingly intended as the composer's own requiem and for long the most performed and widely discussed of his contributions to the quartet medium.

The *Twelfth Symphony* again had its origins in a large-scale Lenin commemoration, this time with the intention of marking his ninetieth birthday in April 1960. That month came and went, however, and it was not until October that Shostakovich spoke in a radio broadcast about his new symphony as following on from its predecessor in depicting the events of the October (Bolshevik) Revolution, as well as providing a synopsis of the movements, two of which were apparently complete. Further progress, however, was halted by the composer breaking his leg at his son's wedding and the work seemingly not resumed until the spring of 1961. Progress thereafter went rapidly (though both the 'contents' of individual movements as well as the overall conception seem to have altered appreciably as a result of this hiatus), with completion coming on 22nd August and a piano duet reduction three days later. This latter was given by Mieczysław Weinberg and Boris Tchaikovsky in Moscow on 8th September, while the work itself received a double première on 1st October 1961, in Kuybïshev (Samara) by the local orchestra and Abram Stasevich, and a televised performance (two hours later) from Leningrad by Yevgeny Mravinsky and the Leningrad Philharmonic. Konstantin Ivanov and the USSR Symphony Orchestra gave the Moscow première on 14th October, while Gennady Rozhdestvensky and the Philharmonia Orchestra undertook the United Kingdom première in Edinburgh on 4th September 1962.

Simfoniya 13 'Babi Yar'

1 I. Babiy Yar

Nad Babim Yarom pamyatnikov nyet.
Krutoi obryv, kak groboye nadgrobye.
Mne strashno,
mne sevodnya stolko let,
kak samomu yevreiskomu narodu.
Mne kazhetsa seichas – ya yudei.
Vot ya bryedupa dryevnemu Egiptu.
A vot ya, na kryeste raspyaty, gibnu,
i da sikh por na mne – sledi gvazdey.
Mne kazhetsa, shto Dreifus – eta ya.
Meshchanstvo – moi danoschik i sudya!
Ya za reshotkoy, ya papal v koltso,
zatravlennyi, oplyovannyi, obolgannyi,
damachki s bryusselshmi oborkami,
viszha, zontami tichut mne v litso.

Mne kazhetsa, ya – malchik v Białystoke.
Krov lyotsya, rastekayas pa palam.
Beschinstvuyut vozhdi traktirnoy stoiki.
I pakhaut vodkoy s lukom popolam.
Ya, sapagom otbroshennyi, bessilny,
naprasna ya pogromshchikov molyu.
Pad gogot: "Bey zhidov! Spasai Rossiyu!"
Labaznik izbivaet mat moyu.

O russhy moi narod, ya znayu,
ty pa sushchnosti internatsionalen,
no chasta te, chi ruki nechisti,
tvoim chisteishim imyenem bryatsali.
Ya znayu dobrotu moyei zyemli.
Kak podla, shto i zhilachkoi ne drognuv,
antisemity narekli sibya:
"Soyuzom russkova naroda."

Symphony No. 13 'Babi Yar'

1 I. Babi Yar

There is no memorial above Babi Yar.
The steep ravine is like a coarse tombstone.
I'm frightened,
I feel as old today
as the Jewish race itself.
I feel now that I am a Jew.
Here I wander through ancient Egypt.
And here I hang on the cross and die,
and I still bear the mark of the nails.
I feel that I am Dreyfus.
The bourgeois rabble denounce and judge me.
I am behind bars, I am encircled,
persecuted, spat on, slandered,
and fine ladies with lace frills
squeal and poke their parasols into my face.

I feel that I am a little boy in Białystok.
Blood is spattered over the floor.
The ringleaders in the tavern are getting brutal.
They smell of vodka and onions.
I'm kicked to the ground, I'm powerless,
in vain I beg the persecutors.
They guffaw: "Kill the Yids! Save Russia!"
A grain merchant beats up my mother.

Oh my Russian people, I know
that at heart you are internationalists,
but there have been those with soiled hands
who abused your good name.
I know that my land is good.
How filthy that without the slightest shame
the anti-Semites proclaimed themselves:
"The Union of the Russian People."

Mne kazhetsa, ya – eta Anna Frank,
prozrachnaya, kak vyetochka v aprele,
i ya lyublyu, i mne nye nado fraz,
no nado, shtob drug v druga my smotreli.
Kak malo mozhno videt, obonyat!

Nelzya nam listev i nelzya nan neba,
no mozhno ochen mnoga –
eta nezhno drug druga
vtyomnoy komnate obnyat!
– "Syuda idut!"
– "Nye boysa. Eta guly samoi vesny,
ona idyot syuda.
Idi ko mne,
dai mne skoreye guby!"
– "Lomayut dver!"
– "Nyet! Eta ledokhod!"

Nad Babim Yarom shelest dihkh trav,
dyerevya smotryat grozno, po-sudeiski.
Zdes molcha vsyo krichit,
i, shapku snyav,
ya chuvstvuyu, kak myediemo sedeyu.
I sam ya, kak sploshnoy bezzvuchny krik,
nad tysyachami tysyach pogrebyonnykh,
Ya – kazhdy zdes rasstrelyanny starik,
Ya – kazhdy zdes rasstrelyanny rebyonok.
Nishto vo mne pro eta nye zabudet.
"Internatsional" pust progremit,
kogda naveh pokhoronen budet
pasledni na zyemle antisemit.
Yevreiskoy krovi nyet v krovi moyei,
no nenavisten zloboy zaskaruzloy
ya vsem antisemitam kak yevrei,
ipatomu ya nastoyashchiy russkiy!

2 II. Yumor

Tsari, koroli, imperatori,
vlastiteli vsei zyemli,
komandovali paradami,
no yumorom nye mogli.

I feel that I am Anne Frank,
as tender as a shoot in April,
I am in love and have no need of words,
but we need to look at each other.
How little we can see or smell!

The leaves and the sky are shut off from us,
but there is a lot we can do –
we can tenderly embrace each other
in the darkened room!
– "Someone's coming!"
– "Don't be frightened. These are the sounds of spring,
spring is coming.
Come to me,
give me your lips quickly!"
– "They're breaking down the door!"
– "No! It's the ice breaking!"

Above Babi Yar the wild grass rustles,
the trees look threatening, as though in judgment.
Here everything silently screams,
and, baring my head,
I feel as though I am slowly turning grey.
And I become a long, soundless scream
above the thousands and thousands buried here,
I am each old man who was shot here,
I am each child who was shot here.
No part of me can ever forget this.
Let the "International" thunder out
when the last anti-Semite on the earth
has finally been buried.
There is no Jewish blood in my blood,
but I feel the loathsome hatred
of all anti-Semites as though I were a Jew –
and that is why I am a true Russian!

2 II. Humour

Tsars, kings, emperors,
rulers of all the world,
have commanded parades
but couldn't command humour.

Shostakovich (his father and uncle witnessed the events at first hand) was undoubted. If a sub-text is at work, it is surely that of an intolerance which results when a government fears its people and resorts to force as a means of coercion: something as relevant to the Soviet Union of Krushchev as it was to the Russia of Nicholas II.

The *Eleventh Symphony* is scored for a sizable orchestra of woodwind in threes (with doublings), four horns, three each of trumpets and trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (five players), celesta, harps (between two and four) and strings. The four movements play without pause so that the overall trajectory of context-event-commemoration-outcome can be felt as an unbroken continuity. The recourse to 'popular' melodies, as well as the allusions to symphonies by the composer's forebears, endows the work with an innately Russian complexion: Shostakovich himself referred to it as his most Mussorgskian.

The first movement, *Palace Square*, starts with a theme in rhythmic unison on the strings that aptly evokes glacial stillness, followed by the all-pervasive motto on timpani. Distant trumpet calls denote human contrast, before the process is repeated (the trumpet calls now being heard on horns), then the string theme and timpani motto return once more. The central section consists of a wistful theme on flutes that assumes a malevolent quality when heard on brass and percussion: a further theme spreads across the orchestra, punctuated by 'signals' on trumpets and trombones, and is made the basis of a contrapuntal discourse that provides the main climax in which all the motivic elements are brought into play. The wistful theme appears again on bassoon, before strings resume their glacial theme and the trumpet calls are modified so that both ideas combine at the close, rounded off by more 'signals' on brass.

The second movement, *The Ninth of January*, opens with subdued though animated activity on the lower strings, a derivative of the sombre theme soon heard on woodwind. The rest of the orchestra enters as the first climax is reached, throwing up a further theme on brass and culminating in a heightened presentation of the woodwind theme that is made the basis of an anxiously expressive interlude. It then underpins the second climax, which itself culminates in a powerful restatement of the woodwind theme by the full orchestra. This at length dies down, joined by the glacial theme from the opening, to a fugitive motion on *pizzicato* strings and percussion. The mid-point is denoted by the glacial theme's appearance on upper woodwind with its attendant brass calls, then the depiction of the massacre is launched by side drum and a vigorous string *fugato* ensues. Brass and percussion add to its momentum, before the music powers to a searing restatement of the glacial theme hammered out in unison by the whole orchestra and underpinned by martial percussion. At its height, the opening theme of the woodwind rears up before the clamour is curtailed: a spectral version of the glacial theme, now combined with several earlier motifs, emerges to evoke the fateful aftermath.

The third movement, *Eternal Memory*, starts with a halting motion on *pizzicato* strings, over which a noble melody ('You Fell As Victims', most famous of all the revolutionary songs and whose deployment was by no means limited to Soviet composers) is heard on violas then extended to upper strings. A sombre new theme, heard initially on woodwind and brass before being transformed on violins, begins the ascent to the apex, at the summit of which the climactic motif from the previous movement is sounded out balefully on full orchestra, underpinned by pounding timpani that continue as the intensity subsides. The viola melody, now a distant recessional, is heard again before *pizzicato* strings arrive at a questioning pause.

The fourth movement, *The Tocsin*, is launched by a strident brass motif that effects a rapid build-up of activity; one that draws in other motifs and culminates in an aggressive transformation of the glacial theme on full orchestra. This proceeds to a forthright theme on strings, its purposeful intent enhanced by tensile interjections from woodwind and brass, which leads to an eruptive discussion of the movement's primary thematic elements and is underpinned by its initial brass motif. This, at length, reaches a climax in a confrontation between unison strings and brass, exploding into the return of the glacial theme, now the backdrop for a cor anglais melody

is brought back on woodwind. The tempo again increases, as this theme is inter-cut with D-S-C-H in a climax of mounting excitement: despite the major-key close, the final bars are a masterly equivocation between triumph and defeat – the composer's motif defiant on timpani to the last.

Symphony No. 11 'The Year 1905', Op. 103 (1957) (CD 9: 8.572082)

Vasily Petrenko: *Shostakovich's own grandfather took part in the 1905 uprising – he was one of the Winter Palace rebels. He survived and was involved in other events. He was a real revolutionary, a hero to the composer. It's not certain exactly what happened that day on 9 January 1905. Some say the tragedy could have been avoided if events had taken a slightly different turn. The people asked for the Tsar to open his food stores as they were starving. The intention at the beginning was to have a dialogue. Shostakovich, I think, was asking, "what if?"*

One of the first pieces by Shostakovich I performed was the Ten Choruses on texts by Revolutionary Poets, *which I sang as a chorister. So I have a voice in my head reciting the events when I hear this symphony. The use of so many popular songs makes it very meaningful to Russians. It's a brilliant setting: the feeling of chill he achieves at the start, the sense of apprehension, are remarkable. It's been seen as a veiled response to the 1956 Hungarian uprising, but I'm not sure. I think he conceived it before he knew: remember, there would have been no truthful reporting at that time.*

Aside from film scores and a new version of his pre-war opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* as *Katerina Ismailova*, Shostakovich's output since his *Tenth Symphony* had been modest. An engaging *Concertino* for two pianos (1953), the effervescent *Festival Overture* (1954) [Naxos 8.553126], and song-cycles *Songs of Our Days* (1954) and *Spanish Songs* (1956) hardly suggest a new direction, but the *Sixth String Quartet* (1956) [8.550972] and the *Second Piano Concerto* (1957) [8.553126] both confirm a greater directness of expression that was to typify his so-called 'Russian period' (roughly 1956-65).

Shostakovich began planning his *Eleventh Symphony* around the time of celebrations (also in part a rehabilitation) to mark his fiftieth birthday in September 1956. Allowing for time devoted to 'official' duties, notably the Second All-Union Congress of Soviet Composers the following spring, he completed it on 4th August 1957. A reduction for piano duet was tried out that September and the world première was given in Moscow on 30th October to coincide with the fortieth anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, Nathan Rakhlin conducting the USSR State Symphony Orchestra. The Leningrad première came four days later, with Yevgeny Mravinsky conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic. The acclaim from both public and party brought Shostakovich his greatest success since that of his *Seventh Symphony* seventeen years earlier: the work was awarded a Lenin Prize in 1958, while performances in the West followed apace. Within a year of its première, the symphony had been commercially recorded four times (Rakhlin in Moscow, Mravinsky in Leningrad, Leopold Stokowski in Houston and André Cluytens in Paris) and remained a popular but not, albeit in the West, critical success throughout the next decade.

Two factors central to an understanding of this symphony need to be addressed. First, though Shostakovich makes extensive use of nine revolutionary songs (stemming not only from 1905 but also previous decades), these are employed not for their extra-musical or propagandist content but as thematic elements in the graphic, but not literal, depiction of events surrounding the 'Bloody Sunday' massacre of over two hundred peaceful demonstrators by Czarist soldiers on 9th January (in the Julian calendar) 1905: moreover, all are related to a rhythmic 'motto' heard on timpani very near the beginning which is a motivic nexus for the entire work. Secondly, though conceived against the background of the Hungarian Uprising, and the composer could hardly have been unaware of the historical correlation, this is no reason to believe that the piece is therefore 'about' events in 1956 rather than in 1905, whose significance to

V dvortsy rmenitykh osob,
vse dni vozlezhashchikh vykholenna,
Yavlyalsa brodyaga Ezop,
i nishchimi oni vyglyadeli.
V domakh, gde khanzha nasledil
svoimi nogami shchuplymi,
Vsyu poshlost Khodzha Nasreddin
shibal, kak shakhmaty, shutkami!

Khotyeli yumor kupit,
da tolko yevo nye kupish!
Khotyeli yumor ubit,
a yumor pokazyval kukish!
Borotsa s nim delo trudnoye.
Kaznili yevo bez kontsa.
Yevo galova otrublennaya
torchala na pike stryeltsa.
No lish skamoroshi dudochki
svoy nachinali skaz,
on zvonko krichal:
"Ya tutochki!"
I likho puskalsa v plyas.

V potryopannom kutsem paltishke,
ponuryas i slovno kayas,
pryestupnikom politicheskim
on, poimanniy, shol na kazn.
Vsem vidom pakornost vykazival,
gotov k nezemnomu zhityu,
kak vdrug iz paltishka vyskalzival,
rukoi makhal
i – tyu-tyu!

Yumor pryatali v kamery,
da chyorta s dva udalos.
Reshotki i steny kamennye
on prokhodil naskvoz.
Otkashlivayas prostuzhenno,
kak ryadovoy boyets,
shagal on chastushkoy-prastushkoy
s vintovkoi na Zimnyi dvorets.

In the palaces of the great,
spending their days sleekly reclining,
Aesop the vagrant turned up
and they would all seem like beggars.
In houses where a hypocrite had left
his wretched little footprints,
Mullah Nasredin's jokes would demolish
trivialities like pieces on a chessboard!

They've wanted to buy humour,
but he just wouldn't be bought!
They've wanted to kill humour,
but humour gave them the finger.
Fighting him's a tough job.
They've never stopped executing him.
His chopped-off head
was stuck onto a soldier's pike.
But as soon as the clown's pipes
struck up their tune,
he screeched out:
"I'm here!"
and broke into a jaunty dance.

Wearing a threadbare little overcoat,
downcast and seemingly repentant,
caught as a political prisoner,
he went to his execution.
Everything about him displayed submission,
resignation to the life hereafter,
when he suddenly wriggled out of his coat,
waved his hand
and – bye-bye!

They've hidden humour away in dungeons,
but they hadn't a hope in hell.
He passed straight through
bars and stone walls.
Clearing his throat from a cold,
like a rank-and-file soldier,
he was a popular tune marching along
with a rifle to the Winter Palace.

Privyk on ko vzglyadam sumrachnym,
no eta yemu nye vryedit,
i sam na sibya s yumorom
yumor paroy glyadit.
On vyechen.
Vyechen!
On lovok.
Lovok!
I yurok,
I yurok!
proidyot cherez vsyo, cherez vsyokh.
Itak, da slantsa yumor!
On muzhestvenniy chelovek!

3 III. V Magazinye

Kto v platke, a kto v platochke,
kak na podvig, kak na trud,
v magazin po-odinochke
molcha zhenshchiny idut.

O, bidonov ikh bryatsanye,
zvon butilok i kastryul!
Pakhnet lukom, ogurtsami,
pakhnet sousom "Kabul."
Zyabnu, dolgo v kassu stoya,
no pakuda dvizhus k nyei,
ot dykhanya zhenshchin stolkikh
v magazinye vsyo teplei.

Oni tikho podzhidayut,
bogi dobriye semyi,
i v rukakh oni szhimayut
dengi trudniye svoyi.

Eta zhenshchiny Rossii.
Eta nasha chest i sud.
I byeton oni mesili,
i pakhali, i kosili …

He's quite used to dark looks,
they don't worry him at all,
and from time to time humour
looks at himself humorously.
He's eternal.
Eternal!
He's artful.
Artful!
And quick,
And quick!
he gets through everyone and everything.
So then, three cheers for humour!
He's a brave fellow!

3 III. In the Store

Some with shawls, some with scarves,
as though to some heroic enterprise or to work,
into the store one by one
the women silently come.

Oh, the rattling of their cans,
the clanking of bottles and pans!
There's a smell of onions, cucumbers,
a smell of "Kabul" sauce.
I'm shivering as I queue up for the cash desk,
but as I inch forward towards it,
from the breath of so many women
a warmth spreads round the store.

They wait quietly,
their families' guardian angels,
and they grasp in their hands
their hard-earned money.

These are the women of Russia.
They honour us and they judge us.
They have mixed concrete,
and ploughed, and harvested …

rumination against lower strings, a transition, in fact, to the second subject – given initially to flute and pizzicato violins then taking on a waltz-like manner when transferred to the strings. The clarinet briefly takes up the theme, which reaches its brief culmination on strings and woodwind. This evens out rhythmically as it subsides, making way for the opening theme in austere dialogue between woodwind and marking the onset of the development. This takes in horns and strings as it builds to the main climax, trumpets and trombones balefully intoning the theme as it assumes increasing animation in strings and woodwind. Confrontational brass and strings are goaded on by martial percussion, bringing about the start of the reprise at a point of maximum intensity (as at the equivalent points of the *Fifth*, *Seventh* and *Eighth Symphonies*). Descending horns and ascending strings alternate with brass in a vastly expanded version of the first theme, strings carrying the momentum through to its defiant restatement on full orchestra, before tension subsides into a pensive recall of the theme on clarinets. This duly segues into the second subject, haltingly on clarinets before transferring to strings and woodwind. A gaunt transition on lower strings brings back the first theme, and a coda in which the opening is evocatively evoked. This climbs higher in the strings to leave flutes and piccolo plangent above strings and timpani as the movement reaches a subdued close.

The second movement, *Allegro*, is a tensile scherzo whose hectic activity for strings is seized upon by woodwind then brass as an aggressive climax is reached. This hurtles into a seething fugato for upper strings against woodwind and brass over impulsive lower strings, side-drums heralding an implacable climax where the main motifs are hurled across the orchestra. This dies down into quietly pulsating activity on strings, surging forth again on woodwind and ending with explosive brass chords. Whether or not a 'portrait' of Stalin, it is certainly among the most graphic musical evocations of violence.

The third movement, *Allegretto*, is among the most distinctive in Shostakovich's output. It opens with a capricious theme on upper strings, complemented by an insouciant idea on woodwind. This latter features the four-note motif D-E flat-C-B which, in German nomenclature, becomes D-S-C-H – yielding the composer's initial and first three letters of his surname. This monogram had appeared in several post-war works, but it only here enjoys the prominence it retained in his later music. It dies down on flutes as strings return to the first theme, further build-ups being curtailed by the appearance of a five-note motif E-A-E-D-A on horn. This is a musical translation of the first name of Elmira Nazirova, a pianist from Baku who had studied with Shostakovich in the late 1940s and with whom he had an intense correspondence during the symphony's composition. Her 'motto' is heard twelve times during this movement: in the middle section, it alternates first with a transformed recall of the work's opening then a breathtaking switch from minor to major which is topped off by artless woodwind arabesques. It is then heard against pizzicato strings in a transition to the opening theme on woodwind. Suddenly the music bursts into life as the insouciant idea returns on violins against syncopated trumpets and percussion, building to a climax where the D-S-C-H motif on strings is angrily confronted by brass and percussion; the E-A-E-D-A motif vividly interposes itself on horns, the composer's motif subsiding as tension eases off into a coda where the 'Elmira' motif alternates with the initial theme on violin. A final horn call ends the movement with an unresolved string chord, against which flutes sound D-S-C-H into nothingness.

The fourth movement, *Andante-Allegro*, begins with a slow section that twice alternates sombre lower strings with plaintive soliloquies for oboe and bassoon. Clarinet then flute trade a questioning three-note motif that, after more intensely undulating passages for the strings, is extended into a seven-note motif. This becomes a playful theme for the strings then woodwind as the fast section is finally launched, taking in a robust folk-like idea before arriving at an increasingly forceful interplay on strings and woodwind of ideas heard in the movement so far. A further, more determined build-up sees the opening theme enter the conflict as the music reaches a forceful climax in which the D-S-C-H motif is shouted out by the whole orchestra. Aspects of the slow section now return, mingling with recalls of D-S-C-H before the playful theme

Poem of the Motherland (1947) in commemorating the Bolshevik Revolution – effectively divided his output between 'official' works intended for immediate consumption and 'private' works written with no prospect of public performance or publication. To the first category belong several film-scores, along with the oratorio *The Song of the Forests* (1949) and the cantata *The Sun shines over our Motherland* (1952), *Two Lermontov Romances* (1950), *Four Dolmatovsky Songs* (1951), the choral *Ten Poems on Revolutionary Poets* (1951) and four *Ballet Suites* (1949-53) arranged from film and theatre scores by his amanuensis Lev Atovmyan [8.557208]. To the second category belong the song-cycle *From Jewish Folk Poetry* (1948), *24 Preludes and Fugues* for piano (1951 [8.554745-46]), *Four Pushkin Monologues* (1952) and the *Fourth* and *Fifth String Quartets* (1949 [8.550972] and 1952 [8.550974]); the latter work's formal dimensions and emotional weight suggesting an imminent return to symphonic composition.

Shostakovich may have conceived a *Tenth Symphony* around 1946/47, while pianist Tatyana Nikolayeva recalled hearing him play the opening of the first movement in 1951. It was not until June 1953, however, that he worked on the symphony in earnest, completing the first movement on 5th August and the second movement on the 27th. The third movement emerged in September and the fourth movement was finished on 25th October, Shostakovich travelling to Leningrad with his protégé Mieczysław Weinberg to 'try out' the new work in an arrangement for piano duet. Yevgeny Mravinsky conducted the public première in Leningrad, with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, on 17th December; the Moscow première, with Mravinsky conducting the USSR State Symphony, followed on 29th December.

Although these performances met with an enthusiastic reception, critical and 'official' reaction was more circumspect, reflecting the difficulty in assessing so wide-ranging a work only months after the death of Stalin. Not for the first time, the absence of a concrete programme and its overall musical complexity made it hard to place the symphony within a Socialist Realist context and so presented problems for the 'ordinary' listener. A heated debate at the Union of Composers during March and April 1954 largely vindicated the piece, but it was considered too individual to be an acceptable blueprint for future symphonic development and denied a Stalin Prize. Officials were still questioning its worth three year later, though by then the symphony had had premières in the United States and Britain – by Dimitri Mitropoulos with the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in New York on 14th October 1954 and by Adrian Boult with the London Philharmonic in London on 10th April 1955. Mravinsky made the first recording with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra in April 1954, followed by Franz Konwitschny with the Leipzig Gewandhaus in June and Mitropoulos with the New York Philharmonic in October. Efrem Kurtz then recorded it with the Philharmonia Orchestra in March 1955, as did Karel Ančerl with the Czech Philharmonic in October.

The *Tenth Symphony* is scored for woodwind in threes, four horns, three each of trumpets and trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (three players) and strings. The first movement brings to a peak Shostakovich's personal recasting of sonata-form, while the second is a scherzo that stands in total contrast, and the third is more of an intermezzo than a slow movement, the finale moving between relative stasis and dynamism to end the work with a determinedly 'Classical' energy. Once viewed as the climax of an autobiographical sequence that had commenced with the *Fifth Symphony*, the *Tenth* exhibits much less of Mahler's influence than do its predecessors – Tchaikovsky, in particular, often to the fore such as to link it with the 'Russian period' that included Shostakovich's next three symphonies.

The first movement, *Moderato*, opens with a long-breathed theme on lower strings whose initial three notes are germinal to the whole work: each of the following movements begins with a variant of it. Upper strings respond with impassive gestures before solo clarinet has a ruminative version of this first subject, activity in the strings gradually increasing to a climax where the theme is stated forcefully on strings and brass. This dies down to leave gaunt brass figures, clarinet continuing its

Vsyo oni perenosili,
vsyo oni perenesut.
Vsyo na svete im pasilno, –
skolka sily im dano!

Ikh obschitivatpostidno!
Ikh obveshivat greshno!
I v karman pelmeni sunuv,
ya smotryu, surov i tikh,
na ustaliye ot sumok
ruki pravyedniye ikh.

4 IV. Strakhi

Umirayut v Rossii strakhi,
slovno prizraki prezhnikh lyet,
lish na paperti, kak starukhi,
koye-gde yeshcho prosyat na khleb.

Ya ikh pomnyu vo vlasti i sile
pri dvore torzhestvuyushchei lzhi.
Strakhi vsyudu, kak tyeni, skolzili,
pronikali vo vsye etazhi.
Potikhonku lyudei priruchali
i na vsye nalgali pyechat:
gde molchat by – krichat priuchali,
i molchat – gde by nada krichat.
Eta stala sevodnya dalyokim.
Dazhe stranna i vspomnit teper.
Tayinyi strakh pered chim-to donosom,
tayinyi strakh pered stukom v dver.

Nu, a strakh gavorit s inastrantsem?
S inastrantsem – ta shto, a s zhenoy?
Nu, a strakh bezotchotnyi ostatsa
posle marshei vdvoyom s tishinoy?

Nye boyalis my stroit v meteli,
ukhodit pad snaryadami v boy,
no boyalis paroyu smyertelno
razgovarnat sam s soboy.
Nas nye sbili i nye rastlili,

They have endured everything,
they will continue to endure everything.
Nothing in the world is beyond them –
they have been granted such strength!

It is shameful to short-change them!
It is sinful to short-weight them!
As I shove dumplings into my pocket,
I sternly and quietly observe
their pious hands
weary from carrying their shopping bags.

4 IV. Fears

Fears are dying out in Russia,
like the wraiths of bygone years;
only in church porches, like old women,
here and there they still beg for bread.

I remember when they were powerful and mighty
at the court of the lie triumphant.
Fears slithered everywhere, like shadows,
penetrating every floor.
They stealthily subdued people
and branded their mark on everyone:
when we should have kept silent, they taught us to scream,
and to keep silent when we should have screamed.
All this seems remote today.
It is even strange to remember now.
The secret fear of an anonymous denunciation,
the secret fear of a knock at the door.

Yes, and the fear of speaking to foreigners?
Foreigners? … even to your own wife!
Yes, and that unaccountable fear of being left,
after a march, alone with the silence?

We weren't afraid of construction work in blizzards,
or of going into battle under shell-fire,
but at times we were mortally afraid
of talking to ourselves.
We weren't destroyed or corrupted,

i nedarom seichas vo vragakh
pobedivshaya strakti Rossiya
yeshcho bolshiy rozhdaet strakh.

Strakhi noviye vizhu, svetleya:
strakh neiskrennim byt so stranoy,
strakh nepravdoy unizit idei,
shto yavlyayutsa pravdoy samoy;
strakh fanfarit do odurenya,
strakh chuzhiye slova povtoryat,
strakh unizit drugikh nedaveryem
i chrezmerno sibye daveryat.

Umirayut v Rossii strakbi.
I kogda ya pishu eti stroki
i paroyu nevolno speshu,
to pishu ikh v yedinstvennom strakhe,
shto ne v polnoyu silu pishu.

5 V. Karyera

Tvyerdili pastyri, shto vreden
i nyerazumen Galilei.
(Shto nyerazumen Galilei …)
No, kak pakazivayet vremya,
kto nyerazumnei – tot umnei!

Uchonyi, svyerstnik Galileya,
byl Galileya nye glupeye.
On znal, shto vyertitsa zyemlya,
no u nyevo byla semya.
I on, sadyas s zhenoy v karety,
svershiv predatelstvo svoyo,
schital, shto dyelayet karyeru,
a mezhdu tem gubil yeyo.
Za asaznaniye planety
shol Galilei odin na risk,
i stal velikim on.
Vot eta – ya ponimayu – karyerist.

and it is not for nothing that now
Russia, victorious over her own fears,
inspires greater fear in her enemies.

I see new fears dawning:
the fear of being untrue to one's country,
the fear of dishonestly debasing ideas,
which are self-evident truths;
the fear of boasting oneself into a stupor,
the fear of parroting someone else's words,
the fear of humiliating others with distrust
and of trusting oneself overmuch.

Fears are dying out in Russia.
And while I am writing these lines,
at times unintentionally hurrying,
I write haunted by the single fear
of not writing with all my strength.

5 V. A Career

The priests kept on saying that Galileo
was dangerous and foolish.
(That Galileo was foolish ...)
But, as time has shown,
the fool was much wiser!

A certain scientist, Galileo's contemporary,
was no more stupid than Galileo.
He knew that the earth revolved,
but he had a family.
And as he got into a carriage with his wife
after accomplishing his betrayal,
he reckoned he was advancing his career,
but in fact he'd wrecked it.
For his discovery about our planet
Galileo faced the risk alone,
and he was a great man.
Now that is what I understand by a careerist.

its Haydnesque clarity and lightness of touch were seen as a tonic to the more radical impulses beginning to circulate in new music.

The *Ninth Symphony* is scored for woodwind in pairs (with piccolo), four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (three players) and strings. Like its predecessor it has five movements, the final three again playing continuously, though their lay-out is (until the finale) closer to the *Third String Quartet*: indeed, the three works form a sub-sequence within Shostakovich's output that offers a likely more revealing commentary than the three symphonies from the first half of the 1940s on the wartime experience.

The first movement is launched with a bustling theme on strings then woodwind, its lively wit complemented by a perky idea for the piccolo, offset by brazen trombone chords. The literal repeat of this exposition, the only such instance in Shostakovich's symphonies, indicates the scale of the movement, but not the intensive motivic interplay or confrontational mood of the development. The modified reprise sees the second theme now allotted to solo violin, before elegant exchanges for the woodwind usher in a coda which wraps up matters succinctly.

The second movement, essentially a slow intermezzo, opens with a winsome melody for clarinet over discreet pizzicato strings. This is taken up by other woodwind in a plaintive discourse, whose wistful mood is deepened by the undulating theme for strings which follows. Three times this unfolds as a curve of intensifying emotion, abetted by plangent woodwind phrases, before trailing off into the resumption of the first theme on flute then horn. The strings' theme, now in a higher register, briefly resumes, but the poignant final word is allotted to the first theme on flute then piccolo over pizzicato strings.

The third movement is a scherzo in which woodwind and strings trade animated gestures. The central episode features an incisive trumpet solo, building to a brief climax before the main theme resumes. This time, however, the energy dissipates rapidly on the way to an uncertain pause.

The fourth movement is announced by stern fanfares on trombones and tuba, answered by a bassoon solo of notable pathos. A stark alternation which is duly repeated, though this time the bassoon alights first on a resigned cadence then a wry descending gesture.

The fifth movement begins with the bassoon outlining a capering theme that is belatedly taken up by the strings. The woodwind sounds an anxious note before taking it up, then a more suave theme on upper strings offers a degree of contrast. Fragments of both these themes are bandied about before an upsurge of energy and the first theme's climactic return on full orchestra, with its successor heard mockingly on woodwind and trumpet. A pause, then a breathless coda combines elements from both themes in a sprint to the decisively inconclusive finish.

Symphony No. 10, Op. 93 (1953) (CD 8: 8.572461)

Vasily Petrenko: No. 10 *is the most compact of all his conventional symphonies. There's a perfection to the form and the contrapuntal writing. Like the* Fifth, *it's a response to criticism, this time all the protest he received after* Symphonies Nos. 8 *and* 9. *It wasn't until the 1990s that the link between this symphony and his Azerbaijani composition pupil Elmira Nazirova came to light, when she opened her archive. It's just one example of many personal things that are probably woven into other works. In the third movement, the horns call out her name, answered by Shostakovich's initials. We know she was his muse, but it's impossible to tell from the letters how far the relationship went. His writing is disputed territory too: complex, poetic – is he using metaphor or referring to actual events? He was 47 – this was his mid-life crisis. His own mortality was becoming real to him: he'd seen Prokofiev, Myaskovsky, Shebalin all die, and he was feeling the effects of his own illness.*

The eight years separating the *Ninth* and *Tenth Symphonies* is the longest hiatus between any two of the composer's works for the genre, though the *Third String Quartet* (1946) [Naxos 8.550974] and the *First Violin Concerto* (1948) [8.550814] are both symphonic in their formal design and expressive scope. The censure meted out to Shostakovich in the 'Zhdanov decree' of February 1948 – not least for the apparent tardiness of his cantata

The fifth movement, *Allegretto*, seems to be a tonic to this desolation with a whimsical theme for bassoon and pastoral rejoinder for strings. A nonchalant flute transition leads to the second and more expressive theme for cellos over halting woodwind, while the third theme pits skirling violins and capering woodwind over pirouetting lower strings and woodwind. From here, variants of the first theme gradually merge in an intricate *fugato* before that theme is stated boldly by brass and woodwind, strings intensifying the momentum on the way to a climax which is none other than a restatement (only minimally varied) of the 'motto' climax from the first movement, and in which glowering brass now have the last word. Dying away, clarinet and violin stealthily recall the third theme, before its predecessor is heard on solo cello. The first theme returns chastened on bassoon, the pastoral rejoinder taking in wistful solos for flute and violin as it merges into the coda. Here the work's first three notes, the second of them now ascending, are heard on flute and pizzicato strings against a pure C major chord on violins.

"Life is beautiful. Everything that is dark and gloomy will rot away, and the beautiful shall triumph", wrote Shostakovich after the symphony's completion. The passing of time has made it possible to hear the extent to which his words are enshrined in the close of this work.

Symphony No. 9, Op. 70 (1945) (CD 4: 8.572167)

Vasily Petrenko: *I've met a few people still alive who listened to all the first broadcasts of these war symphonies: they've told me how they were sitting in the kitchen listening to the* Seventh*, and what a powerful emotional effect it had on them; the* Eighth *was more challenging, but they understood it; after the* Ninth *they got up in silence and left the room. The message was so clear: we may have won the war, but the same guy is in charge.*

The two years between the *Eighth* and *Ninth* Symphonies saw music for film and theatre, the characterful orchestrations that are *Eight English and American Folksongs* (1944) and the pert piano miniatures of *Children's Notebook* (1945). More significant are two chamber works: the *Second Piano Trio* [Naxos 8.553297] with its searing Yiddish musical inflections, and *Second String Quartet* [Naxos 8.550975], whose imposing scale points to the symphonic nature of the composer's ensuing works in a genre that soon dominated his instrumental output.

When Shostakovich began what he intended as his *'Ninth Symphony'* in January 1945, he had in mind a work comparable to its predecessors in scale and impact: a 'victory symphony' honouring the Soviet triumph over Nazi Germany as surely as it recognized the historical implication of the number Nine. The six-minute opening fragment, discovered at the Shostakovich Archive in Moscow as recently as December 2003 and now recorded [Naxos 8.572138], bears witness to his intentions. Yet despite the acclaim of colleagues, the composer abandoned it in June; resuming late the following month with a work that, completed at the end of August, rounded-off his wartime symphonic trilogy with a very different interpretation of 'the Ninth'. The composer and Svyatoslav Richter played a piano duet version in September and the première took place in Leningrad on 3rd November 1945, Mravinsky conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic; the Moscow première, Mravinsky directing the Moscow Philharmonic, followed seventeen days later. Public response was favourable though that of Soviet officialdom was not a little miffed.

Escaping censure at the Union of Soviet Composers in Moscow that December, the work was turned down for a Stalin Prize in 1946 and at a composers' conference during October, it was described by others as the stop-gap solution to that wartime trilogy whose 'real' conclusion had yet to be written. Then in February 1948, following the infamous conference presided over by Andrey Zhdanov, it was placed on a list of proscribed pieces that included the *Sixth* and the *Eighth Symphonies* along with other of Shostakovich's major works. Only in 1955, some two years after Stalin's death, was the *Ninth Symphony* rehabilitated, though it had in the meantime enjoyed success in the West, not least through the first studio recordings made in Boston by Serge Koussevitzky in 1946 and in New York by Efrem Kurtz in 1949, where

Itak, da zdravstvuyet karyera,
kagda karyera takova,
kak u Shekspira i Pastera,
Nyutona i Tolstovo,
i Tolstovo … Lva?
Lva!
Zachem ikh gryazyu pakryvali?
Talant – talant, kak ni kleimi.
Zabyty te, kto proklinali,
no pomnyat tekh, kovo klyali.

Vse te, kto rvalis v stratosferu,
vrachi, shto gibli ot kholyer,
vot eti dyelali karyeru!
Ya s ikh karyer beru primer!
Ya veryu v ikh svyatuyu vyera.
Ikh vyera – muzhestvo mayo.
Ya dyelayu sibye karyeru tem,
shto nye dyelayu yeyo!

Yevgeny Yevtushenko (b. 1932)

So then, three cheers for a career
when it's a career like that of
Shakespeare or Pasteur,
Newton or Tolstoy,
or Tolstoy … Lev?
Lev!
Why did they have mud slung at them?
Talent is talent, whatever name you give it.
They're forgotten, those who hurled curses,
but we remember the ones who were cursed.

All those who strove towards the stratosphere,
the doctors who died of cholera,
they were following careers!
I'll take their careers as an example!
I believe in their sacred belief,
and their belief gives me courage.
I'll follow my career in such a way
that I'm not following it!

English translation by Andrew Huth

Symphony No. 14, Op. 135 (1969)
(CD 11: 8.573132)

Vasily Petrenko: *For me, this is perhaps the composer's greatest work. By the time he wrote it he'd had a heart attack, and was in a dark place. The piece is saying when we die, that's it, there's nothing more. This utter nihilism offended some (like Solzhenitsyn) because there was no Christian sense of redemption. The only song which is different is* O Delvig*, about the poet who was shot by the police. This is a message about one's gift as an artist: you must not waste it, you must use in a right and appropriate way. Human beings will always die, but Art will last forever. There's hope, but not in the physical world. You have to remember that by now the space race is over: they've conquered space and what did they find? To find paradise is now a metaphysical search. The end abruptly stops, it's like an acceleration to the wall, a disappearance.*

The seven-year gap from Shostakovich's *Thirteenth* to his *Fourteenth* symphonies proved the longest between any two of his works in this genre, though it would not be so had the cantata *The Execution of Stephan Razin* [Naxos 8.557812] been expanded into a new symphony as envisaged. There were several film scores – notably for Grigory Kozintsev's *Hamlet* [8.557446] – numerous songs including *Preface to the Complete Collection of My Works*, the *Five 'Krokodil' Romances*, a Pushkin romance *Spring, Spring* and the *Seven Blok Romances* [8.553297], as well as an orchestration of *From Jewish Folk Poetry*. Non-symphonic orchestral music was represented by the *Overture on Russian and Kirghiz Folk Themes*, the symphonic poem *October* [8.557812] and the *Funeral-Triumphal Prelude*, while larger works comprised the *Second Cello* [8.550813] and *Second Violin* [8.550814] *Concertos*, along with the re-orchestration of Schumann's *Cello Concerto* for Mstislav Rostropovich and the *Violin Sonata* for David Oistrakh. Most significant, however, are the four string quartets that were written during this period – Nos. 9 [8.550973], 10, 11 [both 8.550977] and 12 [8.550975] – which reaffirmed the composer's identity with the genre (as equally with the Beethoven Quartet) and facilitated that increasing inwardness which is a hallmark of almost all Shostakovich's music from his final decade.

The genesis of the *Fourteenth Symphony* goes back to 1962, when Shostakovich had orchestrated Mussorgsky's *Songs and Dances of Death.* Work began in earnest at a hospital stay in January 1969, when he informed Isaac Glikman that he was writing an 'oratorio' for soprano, bass, strings and percussion. The piano score was finished on 16th February, with the orchestration completed on 2nd March – by which time the composer had decided against the oratorio designation, there being no chorus involved, and opted instead to call the work a symphony (ironically it was three years earlier that the work intended as a *Fourteenth Symphony* mutated into the *Second Cello Concerto*) – with a dedication to Benjamin Britten (thereby returning the compliment as Britten had dedicated *The Prodigal Son*, the third of his *Church Parables*, to Shostakovich the year before). Considering the new work to be one of his most important, and naturally impatient to hear it, the composer sounded out Rudolf Barshai on performance practicalities and the piece went into rehearsal in June.

Realising a public hearing would not be possible until after summer vacation, Shostakovich agreed to a pre-performance run-through – which took place at the Moscow Conservatoire on 21st June 1969 with soprano Margarita Miroshnikova, bass Yevgeny Vladimirov, and the Moscow Chamber Orchestra with Rudolf Barshai. The response to so unequivocal a work was immediate – albeit marked by the audible departure, mid-way through, of Party functionary Pavel Apostolov who suffered a seizure and died a month later. The official première took place at the Glinka Concert Hall, Leningrad on 29th September with Galina Vishnevskaya (who withdrew from the first hearing through prior commitments) and Vladimirov, again with the Moscow CO and Barshai, while the Moscow public première followed on October 6th. The UK première took place in Aldeburgh on 14th June 1970, Britten conducting the English Chamber Orchestra along with Vishnevskaya and Mark Reshetin, while the United States première came in Philadelphia on 1st January the following year – Eugene Ormandy conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra with had periodic misgivings as to its overall 'tone', but the work has gradually come to be regarded among his most representative and today ranks behind only the *First*, *Fifth* and *Tenth* as the most frequently performed of his symphonies.

The *Eighth Symphony* is scored for an orchestra of flutes and clarinets in fours, oboes and bassoons in threes, four horns, three each of trumpets and trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (four players) and strings. The first movement refines Shostakovich's personal rethink of sonata-form, the second and third are scherzos that confront each other stylistically and musically, while the fourth movement is his first orchestral passacaglia; the finale then attempts its overall resolution via an 'innocence to experience' trajectory left hanging in the balance.

The first movement, *Adagio*, continues the thinking of that from the *Fifth Symphony* in its being predominately slow with the point of maximum tension coming at the start of the reprise. It begins with a forceful 'motto' shared between lower and upper strings; the initial three notes, the second of them descending, are a motivic nucleus which opens each movement and pervades all of the work's themes. Dying down, this makes way for a first theme in which the violins state an aching melody over an austere accompaniment on lower strings. It twice reaches brief but pained climaxes before migrating to woodwind whose commentary serves as transition to a second theme, also on violins, that is more flowing but equally discursive and with a halting undertow on lower strings. This surges forward uncertainly before being recalled by violins over static string harmonies. A curtailed resumption of the theme leaves woodwind musing on the motto at the start of the development, strings and brass entering on the way to a climax in which aspects of the first theme are hurled out by strings against a baleful rhythm first on brass and timpani then side drum. At its peak of accumulated intensity the music is cut off, resuming at a swifter tempo with a fractious version of the motto on strings and woodwind. A brutalized version of the first theme now appears on brass and timpani, strings spurring this on to a massive climax and out of which the motto balefully erupts on full orchestra as the reprise commences. Shuddering strings, left exposed, become the hushed backdrop to a cor anglais monologue which touches on all the ideas heard so far as it moves to a plangent apex, subsiding into a recall of the second theme that continues uncertainly on strings. Muted trumpets and trombones grimly intone the motto, then the coda focuses on the first theme and even manages to attain a strangely becalmed serenity at the close.

The second movement, *Allegretto*, is a bluff though sardonic scherzo whose first theme is dominated by shrill woodwind and coarse strings. This subsides into a more expressive variant, then a second theme is led off by piccolo over strutting strings. Woodwind goad the music on to a heady return of the first theme, cavorting brass and aggressive percussion to the fore, and at whose climax the second theme bursts in inanely on strings and trumpets. Animated percussion and woodwind wind down to a peaceful close, shattered by the brusque final chords.

The remaining three movements play without pause. The third movement, *Allegro non troppo*, is dominated by its initial rhythmic motion. Shrill dissonances on woodwind and trumpet sound above this rhythm, which transfers from strings then trombones to woodwind and pizzicato strings, and finally violins as a brief climax is reached. This subsides into double basses, emerging as vamping accompaniment to a trumpet theme whose jazzy syncopation is urged on by woodwind and side drum. The initial rhythm returns on violas against asides from violins then trombone, building remorselessly via strings to a shattering climax for full orchestra over pounding timpani.

The fourth movement, *Largo*, draws its predecessor's 'head' motif into a tragic theme for trombones and strings, soon subsiding into a rapt introspection that subsequently pervades the music. This theme, on cellos and basses, is made the basis of a sombre passacaglia whose first four variations pursue contrasts in texture between upper and lower strings. Later variations feature horn, piccolo, flutes then clarinet before the theme is heard as a doleful melody on violins. The last two variations highlight strings then woodwind, the latter ending unexpectedly in the major key.

begin a circling ostinato that is made the basis for a climactic return on brass of the work's opening theme, propelled by urgent gestures on side drums and timpani, which brings about a massively determined close.

Lavishly praised in wartime then largely dismissed in its aftermath, the *Seventh Symphony* has latterly enjoyed a return to favour – not least through the possibility of its inspiration stemming from atrocities committed by Stalin as much as Hitler. More than that, however, it stands as a testament to human endurance in the midst of social conflict and cultural crisis.

Symphony No. 8, Op. 65 (1943) (CD 7: 8.572392)

Vasily Petrenko: *By 1943, Rachmaninov had written his* Ode to Victory *and people thought that the war was almost won. But the* Eighth Symphony *wasn't a celebration; already he was asking, "At what cost? What's next?" The* Eighth *is a view of the "underside" of war, the contribution of people far from the frontlines. Evacuated to the village of Ivanova, he saw how the women suffered and struggled on.*

The ending is a requiem: that really bothered people. There's a sense of strain and exhaustion here, partly because he worked through gastric typhoid, but also he was reflecting the life of ordinary people, which was extremely hard. He was saying "we are doing this for our homeland, not for those bastards in power". In some ways I find it the most patriotic symphony.

The twenty months separating the *Seventh* and *Eighth Symphonies* saw several instrumental and vocal items linked with the war effort, but also three works composed purely out of a personal need during 1942. An opera after Gogol's novel *The Gamblers* foundered over the objective to set the entire text and was abandoned after almost an hour of starkly realistic music had been set down. The *Six Romances on Verses by English* [sic] *Poets* subject well-known texts to a pared-down musical treatment that, notably in their (first) orchestration, confirms Shostakovich as continuing the Mussorgsky song tradition. The *Second Piano Sonata* [Naxos 8.570092] contrasts the often brittle intensity of its outer movements with a central *Largo* whose deep introspection anticipates not only the symphony shortly to come but also those written near the end of the composer's career.

It was the sonata that Shostakovich had casually dismissed in a letter written late in May 1943, when he spoke of being creatively spent. Yet in early July he commenced work in earnest on his *Eighth Symphony* at the composers' retreat near Ivanovo, completing the first movement on 3rd August and the following two movements on 18th and 25th of that month. The symphony was finished by 9th September, Shostakovich describing it as shot-through with conflict while being essentially optimistic and affirmative. Yevgeny Mravinsky (to whom the piece was dedicated) took it into rehearsal on 20th October, giving the première with the USSR State Symphony Orchestra at the Moscow Conservatory on 4th November. Compared with the triumphal reception given to the *Seventh 'Leningrad' Symphony*, the reaction was equivocal; even its admirers conceding that, with Soviet victory over Germany becoming ever more certain, such tragic and fatalistic music (which musicologist Boris Asafyev compared to Tchaikovsky's *Pathétique*) was hardly a positive contribution to the war-effort. Further performances followed – not least the American première by Artur Rodzinski with the New York Philharmonic on 2nd April 1944, and the British première by Henry Wood with the BBC Symphony Orchestra on 13th July: between these, however, the Union of Composers had decided that the symphony was too individualistic, its language too obscure, to be awarded a Stalin Prize.

Although the first studio recording was made not so long afterwards – by Mravinsky with the Leningrad Philharmonic in June 1947 – the symphony effectively disappeared when, just ahead of the 'Zhdanov Decree', it was placed on a list of proscribed works in February 1948; not to be rehabilitated until October 1956 when Samuel Samosud gave it in Moscow. Among later performances, one of the most memorable was the British public première when Mravinsky and the Leningrad Philharmonic gave it at London's Royal Festival Hall in the presence of the composer. Shostakovich seems to have

Phyllis Curtin and Simon Estes. The piece was acclaimed as being among Shostakovich's greatest, yet his colleague Lev Lebedinsky broke off their friendship on account of its nihilistic message, while the writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn took offence to one of the poems as belittling the experience of those who had endured the Gulag.

The first recording came promptly in the summer of 1969, with Barshai conducting the musicians as at the initial hearing. Ormandy made the second studio account immediately after the American première, while Visnevskaya and Reshetin were joined by Rostropovich and the Moscow Philharmonic in 1972. That orchestra again set down the work in 1974 with soloists Yevgenia Tselovalnik and Yevgeny Nestorenko, Kirill Kondrashin conducting, while a performance at which Leonard Bernstein conducted the New York Philharmonic with Teresa Kubiak and Isser Bushkin took place on 8th December 1976 and was later issued on disc. Another recording of note is that from November 1981 by Bernard Haitink and the Concertgebouw Orchestra, with soloists Julia Varády and Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, which is sung in the original languages (Spanish, French, Russian and German) of the poems as previously authorized by the composer.

The *Fourteenth Symphony* is scored for soprano and bass soloists, percussion (requiring at least four players) and strings (ten violins, four violas, thee cellos and two double-basses are specified). The eleven songs can also be divided into five groups according to those attaccas between songs, while a further division into three larger movements – comprising songs Nos. 1-3, 4-7 and 8-11 – can also be adduced which serves to reinforce the work's "symphonic song-cycle" connotation and will be referred to below. Alone of Shostakovich's fifteen symphonies, there is no key signature attached – though both outer movements tend to G minor and this is the key most often given in published catalogues (qv. Boosey & Hawkes). It is worth noting that the four poets have in common their early and unfortunate deaths: Federico García Lorca (1898-1936) died at the hands of the Spanish Nationalists; Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918) died in the Spanish flu pandemic; Wilhelm Küchelbeker (1797-1846) died in prison for subversive activities; Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926) died from leukaemia.

The first part symmetrically comprises a slow introduction followed by a scherzo and sonata-like allegro with slow coda. The first song is Lorca's *De profundis*, its evocation of those murdered given an unworldly setting in which the violins' undulating theme finds little warmth from the wan response of lower strings. The bass both partners and alternates with the strings, the music gradually opening out in expression before soloist and strings join in a brief climax which subsides into a recall of the violins' opening theme – itself rounded off by ascending then descending glissandi on double basses.

The second song is Lorca's *Malagueña*, evoking death in the context of archetypal Spanish images of tavern and guitar – and in which the soprano's forthright rhetoric is intensified by the feverish idea on violins which rise towards the limits of their compass above the stealthy movement of lower strings. Half-way through a more lilting theme emerges for the soloist then solo violin, though the initial idea resumes (now largely centred on strings) before the climactic return of the lilting theme sees the entry of castanets. A surging crescendo on strings and two snaps from castanets leads straight into

The third song, which is a setting of Apollinaire's narrative *Lorelei* interpreted as a dramatic scena for both soloists. Its opening section juxtaposes their impulsive exchanges against jabbing gestures on lower strings and xylophone, building towards a headlong contrapuntal discourse between the strings. Tension subsides as the soprano unfolds an expressive melody that finds contrast with the continual motion of lower strings, before a brusque interjection from the bass brings an interlude for xylophone and violins over an insistent figure on woodblock. This dies down on double basses, leading to a varied recall of ideas already heard before soprano then bass provoke a frenzied upsurge on strings and woodblock, summarily curtailed by two strokes on tubular bells. The coda brings a more resigned version of the expressive melody, soprano then bass recalling the ill-fated protagonist over undulating harmonies on strings, celesta, bells and vibraphone.

The second part comprises two relatively expansive

slow movements that frame a compact scherzo then brief intermezzo. The fourth song is Apollinaire's *The Suicide*, its unworldly evocation of death and remembrance given an inward setting led off by solo cello then joined by soprano in a haunting refrain that makes inventive play with the initial words. Strings belatedly enter for a brief climax, soprano continuing until an upsurge for violins and xylophone sees an impassioned idea for the violins over heaving lower strings. It dies down, but a vocal outburst provokes a dissonant string cluster and two more strokes on bells. The soprano then brings a return to the initial inwardness that dies away on bells and lower strings.

The fifth song is Apollinaire's *On Watch*, its satire on approaching death and incestuous love wholly epitomized by the nonchalant refrain for xylophone and continued by soprano over militaristic tom-toms. The strings are initially pizzicato until their angry exchanges with percussion, after which the soprano invokes greater emotion which leads to an eloquent climax. This subsides – soprano and xylophone then heard as though from afar before tom-toms build to a strident close.

The sixth song is Apollinaire's *Madam, look!*, launched by a theatrical gesture on strings with the bass' statement leading to the soprano's mock hysterical response which once again makes inventive play with the Russian translation – notably the three-note gesture echoed on xylophone which invokes desperation before being hammered out over receding strings.

The seventh song is Apollinaire's *At the Santé Prison*, the poet's sojourn in Paris' Santé Prison transformed into an all-encompassing outcry against incarceration. The bass is joined by pensive lower strings for an impassioned climax – gradually subsiding into a speculative interlude for the strings, playing *col legno* (with the wood of the bow) or pizzicato, and woodblock in a remarkable demonstration of textural ingenuity. At length the bass re-enters, and strings duly intensify for a sequence of sombre exchanges into which ideas from the interlude are gradually reintroduced. After a relatively sustained climax the music withdraws to its initial brooding, the bass finally ceasing so that spectral double-basses are the last sounds audible.

The third part comprises three movements of progressively slower tempo which is rounded off by a peremptory epilogue. The eighth song is Apollinaire's *The Zaporozhian Cossacks' Reply to the Sultan of Constantinople*, a flood of invective such as unleashes an uninhibited response – the bass jousting with strings until a climax is reached with the acerbic initial motif engulfed in rapid violin passage-work. Surging to the top of their compass, these are abruptly curtailed going into

The ninth song, a setting of Küchelbeker's *O Delvig, Delvig!* (and which is often seen as a direct address from composer to dedicatee). The plangently affecting initial phrase for divided strings returns twice, setting in relief the bass' entreaty which is (not unreasonably) innately Russian in its expression. At first warmly emotional, the music soon rises to a peak of imploring eloquence before gradually regaining its earlier poise – the refrain then affording a measure of stoic serenity.

The tenth song is Rilke's *The death of the poet* which, with its stark though soulful depiction of human demise, audibly brings the work full-circle with the undulating theme at its start heard in the violins' highest register. The soprano for the most part unfolds at a remove from her accompaniment, though becoming more involved with each brief climax, before joining seamlessly with the strings for the final statement of a haunting refrain which is gradually dissolved in the violas.

The eleventh song is Rilke's *Conclusion*, which is made the blackly ironic epilogue of the whole work. This commences with expectant tapping from the woodblock (the first notable entry of percussion since the seventh song), with soprano and bass singing in unison throughout as a thunderous climax is reached – during which both of the soloists sustain their closing notes over hammered strokes on un-tuned percussion. A violent crescendo on strings has the final, fateful word.

Shostakovich introduced the piece on 21st June 1969. Recalling Mussorgsky, he explained it as "...a great protest against death and a reminder to live one's life honestly, nobly, decently, never committing base acts ... [Death] awaits all of us. I don't see anything good about such an end to our lives and this is what I am trying to convey in this work."

against surging strings and percussion; then to strings and woodwind against swooping brass with the ostinato on percussion; finally to all of the brass and woodwind against offbeat interjections from strings and percussion, with the martial rhythm on no less than three side drums. At last a new version of this theme strikes out on brass, initiating an extended transition upon various of its motifs as tension mounts towards the climactic return of the opening theme – thundered out in baleful terms across the whole orchestra, with a fateful undertow from timpani. Further martial elements intervene before the music can subside into weary recollections of the second theme on violins then flute over lower strings. There follows the extended reprise of this theme as a stoic recessional for bassoon over a halting ostinato on the piano – austere chords from lower woodwind and brass leading to the coda. The consoling strains of the first theme on strings attain a brief climax, followed by a wanly radiant version of the second theme's hymn-like motif for upper strings, then finally a distant recollection of the martial theme for muted trumpet, pizzicato strings and percussion: the side drum receding beyond earshot effecting the quietest of conclusions.

The second movement is unusual among Shostakovich symphonies through its being an intermezzo rather than a scherzo (anticipated by the second movement of the then unplayed *Fourth Symphony*). This starts with a gently capering theme on strings which unfolds at a leisurely pace before it becomes the accompaniment for a plaintive melody on oboe that briefly passes into a warmer variant on cor anglais which is offset by lower strings. The initial theme's return on pizzicato strings is curtailed by a strident idea on upper woodwind against an insistent ostinato on pizzicato strings then percussion – this latter propelling the music to an energetic march-like theme on brass and percussion, incisively partnered by strings. Aspects of these combine in a brief climax which subsides on strings and brass into a curtailed reprise of the initial theme on strings. The plaintive melody now reappears reflectively on bass clarinet with deft accompaniment on flutes and harp. The warmer variant emerges, then strings have a fragmented recall of the initial theme prior to a calmly equivocal ending.

The third movement begins with a plangent chorale on woodwind and harp in rhythmic unison, twice alternating with a passionate string cantilena whose second appearance elegiacally subsides into an inward recollection of the chorale from lower woodwind. Pizzicato chords initiate an elegant melody for flutes over halting strings, which latter then expand on this theme in more expressive terms before recalling the chorale in a codetta of truly Mahlerian pathos. Strings now launch the central section with a dramatic theme which unfolds as a confrontation between strings and brass, martial percussion much in evidence. A rapid crescendo brings with it a heightened return of the chorale on brass against surging strings, the cantilena heard resplendent on brass, before the woodwind then the strings continue this reprise in more literal terms. The elegant melody reappears on violas then full strings prior to intensified restatements of both chorale and cantilena being allotted mainly to strings, and reaching a fatalistic close on woodwind underpinned by echoing chords deep in the bass.

The fourth movement proceeds from the above chords during a span of calmly expectant music whose string theme is twice offset by enquiring asides on woodwind. At length the momentum picks up apace with an incisive theme on strings that soon builds in a rapid crescendo of activity towards a heated confrontation with the brass, then on to an explosive climax that is urged on by incisive tattoos from percussion. The initial music is now recalled by woodwind as the music subsides into ostinato patterns on strings; these in turn are countered by aggressive *col legno* strikes with upper woodwind warily in attendance. The rhythmic motion soon slows to an intensely wrought 'sarabande' for all the strings that alternates with more reflective passages in which clarinets then flutes come soulfully to the fore. The strings round off this section with a subdued postlude, which itself passes into an extended recall of the initial music that proceeds as though in slow motion – building in a gradual crescendo (with elements of the composer's favoured 'passacaglia' form) where earlier motifs are recalled on the way to a final apotheosis. Strings unfold an intensified version of the initial idea, continued by horns as strings

and remained there for five months. This loss of creative impetus meant that work on the finale did not begin until 10th December and was completed 17 days later, by which time the work's status as an embodiment of and response to the Grand Patriotic War was being circulated as a propaganda tool of real potency.

Fraught conditions meant the première had to take place in Kuybïshev, where Samuil Samosud (who tried to persuade the composer to provide a choral apotheosis in praise of Stalin) conducted the Bolshoy Theatre Orchestra on 5th March 1942, in a performance broadcast nationwide and transmitted abroad. The dedication 'To the City of Leningrad' set the seal on a work whose symbolic importance caught the public imagination like few before it, not least when given by the combined Bolshoy Theatre and All-Union Radio orchestras in Moscow on March 29th, and it was little surprise when a Stalin Prize was bestowed. The score had been microfilmed and flown via Tehran to the West – Henry Wood giving the UK première with the London Symphony as a radio broadcast on June 22nd (having made several cuts so that the nine o'clock news could begin on time), followed by a performance at the London Proms seven days later. Arturo Toscanini gave the American première in a broadcast with the NBC Symphony in New York on July 19th, while Serge Koussevitzky gave it in concert at Lenox with the Boston Symphony on August 14th. Most significant was the Leningrad première on August 9th, Karl Eliasberg conducting the Leningrad Radio Orchestra along with brass players recalled from the front in an account broadcast on loudspeakers throughout the city as a psychological weapon against the German troops.

The symphony's first recording, made by Toscanini and the NBC Symphony, was a transfer from the July 19th 1942 radio broadcast. It was followed in December by Leopold Stokowski conducting the same orchestra, from another NBC broadcast. The first studio recording was made by Yevgeny Mravinsky and the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra in Moscow on 7th January 1953. Karel Ančerl and the Czech Philharmonic followed in September 1957, while Leonard Bernstein and the New York Philharmonic's slightly abridged reading came in October 1962. Yevgeny Svetlanov and the USSR Symphony followed early in 1968, with the first UK recording made as late as January 1974 when Paavo Berglund conducted the Bournemouth Symphony.

The *Seventh Symphony* is scored for three flutes (doubling piccolo and alto flute), two oboes, cor anglais, three clarinets, bass clarinet, two bassoons, contra-bassoon, eight horns, six each of trumpets and trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (up to six players), two harps, piano and strings (around 60 desks). Shostakovich spoke of a programme running across its four movements representing 'War', 'Memories', 'Native Expanses' and 'Victory', but he quickly supressed any such subtitles. A moderately paced sonata design, its development largely replaced by the (in)famous 'war machine' episode, is followed by a fusion of scherzo and intermezzo, a rondo-like *Adagio* then a formally fluid yet highly systematic finale.

The first movement commences with a resolute theme on strings and woodwind, punctuated by incisive brass chords. This yields a number of related motifs before returning to the opening idea, after which it subsides via pensive woodwind writing into the second theme – a gently lyrical melody for upper strings above an undulating accompaniment on lower strings, which is presently joined by a hymn-like motif from woodwind and expands in almost balletic terms before the theme's initial gesture emerges plaintively on piccolo above lower strings. The exposition then fades out contemplatively on piccolo then violin and strings – at which point a new theme is heard, as if in the distance, on pizzicato strings against a martial rhythm on side drum. Firstly this passes to subdued flutes over gently rocking strings; then to capricious flutes and piccolo over more animated strings; then to a 'double variation' on oboe and bassoon; then to muted brass with side drums countered by an insistent ostinato on piano; then to lively imitative exchanges between clarinets and oboes; then to violins as the theme comes decisively into the foreground; then to all the strings in rhythmic unison; then to lower brass with the ostinato on strings and percussion; then to all of the brass

Simfoniya 14

1 De profundis
Federico García Lorca (1898-1936) / I. Tynyanova

Sto goryacho vlyublyonnïkh
Snom vekovïm usnuli
Gluboko pod sukhoy zemlyoyu.
Krasnïm peskom pokrïtï
Dorogi Andalusii.
Vetvi oliv zelyonïkh
Kordovu zaslonili.
Zdes' im krestï postavyat,
Chtob ikh ne zabïli lyudi.
Sto goryacho vlyublyonnïkh
Snom vekovïm usnuli.

2 Malagueña / Malagen'ya
Federico García Lorca / Anatoli Geleskul

Smert' voshla i ushla iz tavernï.
Smert' voshla i ushla iz tavernï.
Chyornïye koni i tyomnïye dushi
V ushchel'yakh gitarï, brodyat.
Zapakhli sol'yu i zharkoy krov'yu
Sotsvet'ya zïbi nervnoy.
A smert' vsyo ukhodit
I vsyo ne uydyot iz tavernï.

3 La Loreley / Loreleya
Guillaume Apollinaire (1880-1918) / Mikhail Kudinov

K belokuroy koldun'ye iz prireynskogo kraya
Shli muzhchinï tolpoy, ot lyubvi umiraya.

I velel yeyo vïzvat' yepiskop na sud,
Vsyo v dushe yey proshchaya za yeyo krasotu.

'O skazhi, Loreleya, ch'i glaza tak prekrasnï,
Kto tebya nauchil etim charam opasnïm?'

Symphony No. 14

1 De profundis

Those one hundred lovers
are sleeping for ever
beneath the dry earth.
Andalusia has
long red roads.
Cordoba, green olive trees
where a hundred crosses
can be raised
in their memory.
Those one hundred lovers
are sleeping for ever.

2 Malagueña

Death walks in and out of the tavern.
Death walks in and out of the tavern.
Black horses and sinister people
wander the deep paths of the guitar.
And there's a smell of salt and women's blood
on the febrile spikenards along the coast.
Death walks in and out,
out of and into the tavern walks death.

3 Lorelei

There was in Bacharach a sorceress fair,
who let every man around die of love.

The bishop had her summoned to his tribunal
but absolved her in advance on account of her beauty.

O fair Lorelei, with your eyes full of gemstones,
from which magician did you get your sorcery?

‘Zhizn’ mne v tyagost’, yepiskop, i proklyat moy vzor.
Kto vzglyanul na menya, svoy prochyol prigovor.

O yepiskop, v glazakh moikh plamya pozhara,
Tak predayte zh ognyu eti strashnïye charï!’

‘Loreleya, pozhar tvoy vsesilen: ved’ ya
Sam toboy okoldovan i tebe ne sud’ya.’

‘Zamolchite, yepiskop! Pomolites’ i ver’te:

Eto volya Gospodnya predat’ menya smerti.

Moy lyubimïy uyekhal, on v dalyokoy strane.
Vsyo teper’ mne ne milo, vsyo teper’ ne po mne.

Serdtse tak isstradalos’, chto dolzhna umeret’ ya.
Dazhe vid moy vnushayet mne mïsli o smerti.

Moy lyubimïy uyekhal, i s etogo dnya
Svet mne belïy ne mil, noch’ v dushe u menya.’

I tryokh rïtsarey kliknul yepiskop: ‘Skoreye
Uvedite v glukhoy monastïr’ Loreleyu.

Proch’, bezumnaya Lor, volookaya Lor!
Tï monakhiney stanesh’, i potyomknet tvoy vzor.’

Troye rïtsarey s devoy idut po doroge.
Govorit ona strazhnikam khmurïm i strogim:

‘Na skale toy vïsokoy dayte mne postoyat’,
Chtob uvidet’ moy zamok mogla ya opyat’,

Chtob svoyo otrazhen’ye ya uvidela snova,
Pered tem, kak voyti v monastïr’ vash surovïy.’

Veter lokonï sputal, i gorit yeyo vzglyad,
Tshchetno strazha krichit: ‘Loreleya, nazad! Nazad!’

‘Na izluchinu Reyna lad’ya vïplïvayet,
V ney sidit moy lyubimïy, on menya prizïvayet.

I’m weary of living and my eyes are damned;
all men have perished, my lord, on meeting my gaze.

My eyes are flames and not gemstones,
throw, oh throw this sorcery into the flames.

I am ablaze in those flames, o fair Lorelei;
let another condemn you, for I am bewitched by you.

You laugh, my lord, when you should be
praying to the Virgin for me,
so let me die, and may God protect you.

My lover has left for a far-off land,
so let me die, since there is nothing I love.

My heart aches so that I must die,
were I to look into my own eyes I should have to die.

My heart has ached so since he left,
my heart began to ache so the day he went away.

The bishop summoned three knights armed with lances:
Take this poor demented woman off to the convent.

Go now, deluded Lore, go, Lore with your trembling gaze,
you will be a nun, dressed all in black and white.

Then all four set off along the highway.
Lorelei begged them, her eyes shining like stars,

Good knights, allow me to climb up to that cliff so high,
to look one last time upon my fine castle,

To see one last time my reflection in the river,
then I shall go to the convent of maidens and widows.

There on high the wind twisted her tumbling locks.
The knights cried out, Lorelei, Lorelei.

There far below a little boat is floating along the Rhine:
my lover is at the helm, he has seen me, he’s calling me.

fore. A more ingratiating theme briefly alluded to earlier now joins with the capering theme for a brief passage of respite before a vamping idea on lower woodwind and strings draws in the whole orchestra in music of contrapuntal dexterity that leads to an explosive climax over charging percussion. Timpani then return to the capering theme as before, which now alternates with the ingratiating theme as woodwind and strings wind down in a mood of anxious calm.

The third movement does not attempt to bridge the gulf between its predecessors, setting off with a capricious theme on strings whose statements come replete with ironic woodwind comments and separated by equally animated ideas on strings and brass. At length this is succeeded by a lumbering theme on lower woodwind and strings, rising through the orchestra as tension mounts inexorably towards an unexpectedly violent climax. This subsides to leave bassoons then upper woodwind musing uncertainly, before the solo violin brings back the capricious theme and leads to a curtailed reprise. The lumbering theme now takes on a much jollier profile, excitable woodwind and strings leading to its final restatement in a raucous apotheosis.

Symphony No. 7 ‘Leningrad’, Op. 60 (1941)
(CD 6: 8.573057)

Vasily Petrenko: *The people of Russia were caught between two evils: which would they prefer? Stalin was a murderer but gave them national identity; Nazism promised genocide. I feel here he was raging against all anti-human force. At the beginning we are dealing with some of the most beautiful music ever written, which is then systematically destroyed. You can hear that senseless, mechanical force in the motoric drums, the chilling banality of the march. You can hear his experience, too, of being a fire warden on the roofs of St Petersburg. He refused to leave for a long time yet he was still evacuated before the really horrible things happened, before people started eating each other. What he had witnessed was the amazing strength of the human spirit, in defending each other and their city.*

He felt a responsibility to get as many musicians as possible back from the front line to play in the Leningrad performance. They were given food: that’s why there are so many extra brass, harps, woodwinds – he was literally saving lives. And so the Symphony *is a memorial to the people of Leningrad. The live broadcast was a powerful symbol of resilience, for the country, and for the Allies.*

The two years following the *Sixth Symphony* [Naxos 8.572658] were largely taken up by several highly contrasting film-scores, along with incidental music to Grigoriy Kozintsev’s Leningrad staging of *King Lear* that was to be Shostakovich’s last such undertaking. An orchestration of Mussorgsky’s *Boris Godunov* went unheard until 1959 – while his only abstract piece from this period, the *Piano Quintet* [8.554830], was a resounding success at its première on 23rd November 1940; being awarded a Stalin Prize and also receiving comparable acclaim in the West, where musical ‘officialdom’ remained equivocal over the nature of Shostakovich’s engagement with the formal and expressive tenets of the classical tradition.

The weeks after the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union on 22nd June 1941 saw Shostakovich volunteer with the Home Guard, though his duties as fire-fighter amounted to little beyond a photograph of the suitably attired composer on the roof of the Leningrad Conservatoire. He made arrangements of numerous songs and arias for entertaining the troops, and sketched a large-scale choral work based on the *Psalms of David* before abandoning it for what became his *Seventh Symphony*. Begun on 19th July (though its underlying premise may well have been conceived some months earlier), the first movement was largely complete by 29th August as the siege of Leningrad (which lasted 870 days and cost over a million lives) intensified. The second movement was finished by 17th September and its successor 12 days later – before, on 1st October, Shostakovich and his family flew to Moscow before boarding a train, with various other artistic figures, heading east. They planned to travel to Tashkent (where the Leningrad Conservatoire had reassembled), but alighted at Kuybïshev (now Samara) on 22nd October

that for Grigoriy Kozintsev and Leonid Trauberg's *Vyborg District* which was the final instalment of the acclaimed *Maxim* trilogy as well as for Fridrikh Ermler's two-part ideological epic *The Great Citizen*. This period also gave rise to the *Suite for Theatre Orchestra* [8.555949], once known as the *Second Jazz Suite*, though the piano score of that long-missing piece resurfaced a decade ago and has since been orchestrated and performed, and the *First String Quartet* [8.550973], whose Haydnesque economy and modesty makes it an unlikely beginning to one of the most significant quartet cycles of the twentieth century.

The *Sixth Symphony* originated in a large-scale vocal setting of the poem *Vladimir Ilyich Lenin* by Vladimir Mayakovsky (who had committed suicide in 1930). In interviews during the autumn of 1938 Shostakovich was initially forthcoming about the conception of his projected opus, but by the following January he was alluding to it in strictly abstract terms. Work seems to have commenced in earnest by mid-April, with excerpts played by the composer to his colleagues in Leningrad towards the end of August, and the whole symphony completed during October – when Shostakovich spoke of its exuding greater lyricism and affirmation than its predecessor. The première, given in Leningrad by Yevgeny Mravinsky and the Leningrad Philharmonic on 21st November 1939 (two years to the day after that of the *Fifth Symphony*) was well received and the finale (of which the composer was especially proud) encored. Critical reception was more equivocal, not least because of the unusual layout of movements, and the Moscow première, also conducted by Mravinsky, was marred by a negative response in official circles.

Yet if the piece had failed to meet the expectations generated by its predecessor, it did not lack for performances: Leopold Stokowski gave the United States première with the Philadelphia Orchestra on 29th November 1940 then made the first recording that December, to be followed by Fritz Reiner with the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra in March 1945 and Mravinsky with the Leningrad Philharmonic in November 1946. The British première did not take place until 24th October 1953, Anatole Fistoulari conducting the London Philharmonic, with which orchestra Sir Adrian Boult went on to record it in August 1958. Thereafter recordings appeared with some frequency and the work now boasts a substantial discography from a variety of conductors.

The *Sixth Symphony* is scored for woodwind in threes (though with four clarinets), four horns, three each of trumpets and trombones, timpani, percussion (three players), celesta, harp and strings. A substantial and intense *Largo* finds contrast with an often aggressive *Allegro* and a seemingly skittish *Presto* which together amount to less than half of the total playing time.

The first movement is one of Shostakovich's most powerful. It begins with a sombre motif on lower strings and woodwind, its initial four notes germinal to the work as a whole, which is succeeded by a passionate motif on strings with timpani, the trill on whose fourth note is of especial significance. These motifs combine in a sustained paragraph which eases into a brooding dialogue between upper and lower strings. Woodwind re-enter for a searching polyphony that, in its turn, makes way for the motifs now heard ruminatively on piccolo with harp and strings. This intensifies towards a climax where the motifs are sounded balefully on brass against descending strings and thundering timpani. Tension subsides to leave the trill as a hushed backdrop against which cor anglais, then muted trumpets and flutes muse over a new idea which is also defined by its initial four notes. Strings enter as the music moves to a heartfelt climax, after which the trills resume while clarinets, oboes then strings continue with the most recent idea, the violins rising to the top of their compass as gong and lower woodwind are heard from the depths. Flutes sound forlornly, continuing in an improvisatory manner (latterly with strings) before their trills are magically taken up by celesta and strings. Horns suffuse the texture with warmth as the initial motifs fuse into an eloquent theme on strings that is itself cut short by pensive woodwind, before a regretful recall of the cor anglais motif on violins over doleful timpani chords.

The second movement opens in complete contrast with a capering theme on woodwind and pizzicato strings. This becomes more animated as the strings impetuously trade gestures, then a sardonic idea on bassoons effects an aggressive outburst with brass and percussion to the

Tak legko na dushe, tak prozrachna volna…'
I s vïsokoy skalï v Reyn upala ona,

Uvidav otrazhyonnïye v gladi potoka
Svoi reynskiye ochi, svoy solnechnïy lokon.

4 Le suicidé / Samoubi'ytsa
Guillaume Apollinaire / Mikhail Kudinov

Tri lilii, tri lilii… Lilii tri na mogile moyey bez kresta,
Tri lilii, ch'yu pozolotu kholodnïye vetrï sduvayut,

I chyornoye nebo, prolivshis' dozhdyom, ikh poroy omïvayet,
I slovno u skipetrov groznïkh, torzhestvenna ikh krasota.

Rastyot iz ranï odna, i kak tol'ko zakat zapïlayet,

Okravavlennoy kazhetsya skorbnaya liliya ta.
Tri lilii, tri lilii… Lilii tri na mogile moyey bez kresta,
Tri lilii, ch'yu pozolotu kholodnïye vetrï sduvayut.

Drugaya iz serdsa rastyot moyego, chto tak sil'no stradayet,
Na lozhe chervivom. A tret'ya kornyami mne rot razrïvayet.

Oni na mogile moyey odinoko rastut, i pusta
Vokrug nikh zemlya, i kak zhizn' moya, proklyata ikh krasota.
Tri lilii, tri lilii… Lilii tri na mogile moyey bez kresta.

5 Les attentives I / Nacheku
Guillaume Apollinaire / Mikhail Kudinov

V transheye on umryot do nastuplen'ya nochi,
Moy malen'kiy soldat, chey utomlyonnïy vzglyad
Iz-za ukrïtiya sledil vse dni podryad
Za Slavoy, chto vzletet' uzhe ne khochet.
V transheye on umryot do nastuplen'ya nochi,
Moy malen'kiy soldat, lyubovnik moy i brat.

My heart is filled with tenderness, 'tis my lover who comes.
Then she leant over the edge and fell down into the Rhine.

For the fair Lorelei had seen in its waters
her Rhine-coloured eyes, her tresses golden as the sun.

4 The Suicide

Three tall lilies, three tall lilies on my grave with no cross.
Three tall lilies dusted with gold that the wind scatters
in fright,
watered only when a dark sky showers them,
majestic and handsome like royal sceptres.

One is growing from my wound, and when daylight
catches it,
bloodied, it reaches upwards: this is the lily of fear.
Three tall lilies, three tall lilies on my grave with no cross.
Three tall lilies dusted with gold that the wind scatters
in fright.

Another grows from my heart as it lies aching in the earth
where the worms are eating it; the last is growing
from my mouth.
On my grave set apart all three reach upwards,
all alone, all alone, and, I believe, as damned as I am.
Three tall lilies, three tall lilies on my grave with no cross.

5 On Watch

The one who has to die tonight in the trenches
is a young soldier whose eye idly falls
throughout the day on the trophies that were hung
from the cement crenellations during the night.
The one who has to die tonight in the trenches
is a young soldier, my brother and my lover.

I vot poetomu khochu ya stat' krasivoy.
Pust' yarkim fakelom grud' u menya gorit,
Pust' opalit moy vzglyad zasnezhennïye nivï,
Pust' poyasom mogil moy budet stan obvit.
V krovosmeshenii i v smerti stat' krasivoy
Khochu ya dlya togo, kto dolzhen bït' ubit.

Zakat korovoyu revyot, pïlayut rozï,
I siney ptitseyu moy zacharovan vzglyad.
To probil chas lyubvi, i chas likhoradki groznoy.
To probil smerti chas, i net puti nazad.
Segodnya on umryot, kak umirayut rozï,
Moy malen'kiy soldat, lyubovnik moy i brat.

6 **Les attentives II / Madam, posmotrite!**
Guillaume Apollinaire / Mikhail Kudinov

Madam, posmotrite!
Poteryali vï chto-to…
- Akh! Pustyaki! Eto serdtse moyo,
Skoreye yego podberite.
Zakhochu—otdam. Zakhochu—
Zaberu yego snova, pover'te.
I ya khokhochu, khokhochu, khokhochu, khokhochu,
Kha, kha, kha, kha, kha, kha, kha, kha, kha, kha.
I ya khokhochu, khokhochu
Nad lyubov'yu, chto skoshena smert'yu.

7 **A la Santé / V tyur'me Sante**
Guillaume Apollinaire / Mikhail Kudinov

Menya razdeli dogola,
Kogda vveli v tyur'mu;
Sud'boy srazhyon iz-za ugla,
Nizvergnut ya vo t'mu.

Proshchay, vesyolïy khorovod,
Proshchay, devichiy smekh.
Zdes' nado mnoy mogil'nïy svod,
Zdes' umer ya dlya vsekh.

And since he has to die, I want to make myself beautiful.
I want to light the torches with my bare breasts,
I want to melt the frozen pool with my wide eyes,
and as for my hips, I want them to be gravestones.
For since he has to die, I want to make myself beautiful,
in incest and death, two such handsome gestures.

The cows at sunset are lowing all their roses,
the wing of the blue bird gently fans me.
It's the hour of Love and its ardent neuroses,
it's the hour of Death and the final promise.
The one who has to die just as roses die
is a young soldier, my brother and my lover.

6 **Madam, look!**

Madam, listen to me a moment:
you've dropped something.
It's my heart, nothing much.
Pick it up again then.
I gave it, I took it back again.
It was down there in the trenches.
It's here, and I laugh and laugh and laugh and laugh,
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha.
It's here, and I laugh and laugh
about the love affairs cut down by the scythe of death.

7 **At the Santé Prison**

Before going into my cell
I had to strip naked
and that sinister voice howled,
Guillaume, what's become of you?

Farewell, farewell, songs and dances,
o my youth, o young girls.
Lazarus going into his tomb
instead of rising from it as he did.

the scherzo placed second), but Shostakovich's rethink of first movement sonata-form was to have profound consequences for his later symphonies, while the finale's radical overhaul of the Beethovenian 'tragedy to triumph' model is fully in keeping with the spirit of its times.

The first movement opens with a commanding downward gesture on strings, thrice repeated in the course of a first theme that unfolds hesitantly and with great pathos. Initially on upper strings, it belatedly migrates to woodwind and brass on the way to its nobly wrought apex. The fourth appearance of the initial gesture leads into the second theme, a long-limbed melody for violins over a steady tread on lower strings. Ruminative woodwind comments and a brief recollection of the first theme emerge before it winds down to a pause, whereupon the development commences with the first theme heard balefully on brass over a piano ostinato. Various of its components now emerge as the music gains in energy, taking in a martial transformation of the theme on brass and percussion, before the reprise is launched at the point of maximum intensity with the first theme in rhythmic unison across the orchestra. It subsides into an idyllic version of the second theme for woodwind and horn, but this is short-lived as the coda enters with a haunted recollection of the first theme – replete with plangent echoes of the opening gesture and ending with somnolent chords on celesta.

The second movement is a scherzo whose bluff initial repartee for the strings is complemented by a sardonic theme on woodwind with its portentous rejoinder on horns. This makes way for a trio section where violin then flute unfold a capricious melody, offset by strutting upper strings and woodwind. It alights on a fugitive version of the opening for woodwind and pizzicato strings, leading to the return of the main theme with its rejoinder now on trumpets then horns. An uneasy recall of the trio theme on oboe is impatiently brushed aside at the close.

The third movement (in which brass are silent) begins with a heartfelt melody on strings that, unfolding at length, ushers in an evocative, folk-like idea and a rapt theme for divided strings in its wake. Another theme, on flute and harp, eases the tension before a version of the opening melody leads to a brief climax; this dies away to leave muted strings, against which woodwind (oboe, clarinet then flutes) muse on the first theme, interspersed with atmospheric chords for strings. The first theme returns on woodwind, strings entering as the intensity builds to an anguished statement of the third theme on violins against a blizzard of orchestral tremolos. This then migrates to the lower strings as elements of the first three themes are intensively discussed, before the fourth theme (on upper strings) at length restores calm. Ethereal echoes of the first theme on celesta and harp bring about the serene ending.

The fourth movement now bursts in with a strident theme on brass and timpani, its components excitedly discussed as the tempo increases. In the process, another (directly related) theme emerges on the trumpets over skirling strings, triumphantly sounded out by the whole orchestra before the pounding opening music returns. Fanfaring brass wind down to an expressive transformation of the second theme on horns over shimmering strings. This latter is reduced to an oscillating phrase that takes in a subdued version of the first theme on strings, before opening onto a plateau of gentle radiance. From this point, the first theme builds steadily to the final climax – capped by a transformation of the first theme (its initial four notes confirmed as an upward reversal of the work's opening gesture) whose pivoting between affirmation and uncertainty is carried through to the fateful conclusion.

Symphony No. 6, Op. 54 (1939) (CD 5: 8.572658)

Vasily Petrenko: *There are two big influences here. His experiments with the symphonic form came from Mahler. Mussorgsky was the inspiration for the harmonic language, a language both of purity and extremity. His work on* Boris Godunov *and* Khovanschina *left its mark. The third movement* Presto *is incredibly demanding – perhaps he was testing how far he could go back to the language of the* Fourth Symphony *at that point.*

The two-and-a-quarter years between the *Fifth* and *Sixth Symphonies* were occupied mainly by film scores, notably

acclaimed *Fifth Symphony*, Shostakovich was heard to remark: "I finished the symphony fortissimo and in the major. … I wonder what [everyone] would be saying if I had finished it pianissimo and in the minor?". Only 25 years on was it possible to understand the true import of this enigmatic comment.

Symphony No. 5, Op. 47 (1937) (CD 4: 8.572167)

Vasily Petrenko: *There will always be that question: what if the* Fourth *had been premièred, and had been accepted? Would Shostakovich have left us the same symphonic legacy? Would he have gone further down the route of collage, complexity into more radical territory? Years later, he probably saw that in this symphony he had found an answer to a problem that was not just political but artistic too. The* Fourth *is what I call "good coal"; but parts of the* Fifth *came to be diamonds. You can see it like a process of chemistry, a transformation brought about by extraordinary pressures. The problems of the* Fourth Symphony *are the problems of contemporary music today: there are just too many thoughts happening at the same time. They cannot all be heard. In the* Fifth *he crystallised his thoughts. It's ambivalent, yes, but stark, and you can clearly hear two different ideas going on at the same time. The response to the* Fifth Symphony *was remarkable, from every one in the hall, because it spoke to them, and for them, so clearly.*

For me, the finale expresses the glory of the human spirit. Of course the celebration is being forced, but there's a sense that whatever you try to do with people, they will rise.

The eleven months between the *Fourth* and *Fifth Symphonies* seem less so when one considers that, aside from film-scores and incidental music for the propaganda play *Salute to Spain* [Naxos 8.572138], Shostakovich wrote only *Four Romances on Verses of Pushkin* (1936). Yet the final song, *Stanzas* (the only one not orchestrated by the composer in an arrangement that was unknown until after his death), shares a thematic kinship with the finale of the *Fifth* which may point to the essential meaning of his most famous and discussed symphony.

When he began his *Fifth Symphony* in April 1937, Shostakovich had had no new concert première for two years; the *Fourth Symphony* having been withdrawn from rehearsal the previous November. Any soul-searching now seemed behind him as he completed the score in September, the slow movement apparently in three days, and played it to the Composers' Union the next month. The première took place in Leningrad on 21st November 1937, the little-known Yevgeny Mravinsky conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic. Response was overwhelmingly positive – to an extent that officials attributed this success to the hall being planted with the composer's admirers, though the success of its Moscow première on 29th January 1938 – Alexander Gauk conducting the USSR State Symphony – confirmed its public acceptance. Beginning with Mravinsky in 1938 and Leopold Stokowski the following year, it soon became among the most recorded of contemporary works and, at Shostakovich's death, had amassed more performances than any twentieth-century symphony other than the *Second Symphony* of Sibelius (completed 36 years earlier).

Critical response immediately stressed its defining in music of the principals of Socialist Realism, Alexey Tolstoy coining the phrase "the formation of a personality" that the composer himself picked up on soon after. The latter also approved the description "the practical creative answer of a Soviet artist to just criticism" – one that was to assume the status of a *bona fide* subtitle in the West, for all that its provenance remains obscure and was possibly even invented by Shostakovich to conceal any deeper intentions. In particular, the close of the *Finale* as expressing triumphal optimism or stark resignation has dogged the work's reception from the outset: yet, in its bringing the relationship between the individual and the state to a head, this ending can be heard to resolve those issues whose musical embodiment are central to the symphony as a whole.

The *Fifth Symphony* is scored for woodwind in threes (though only two oboes), four horns, three each of trumpets and trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (four players), celesta, two harps, piano and strings. Its four movements follow the standard classical trajectory (with

Net, ya ne tot,
Sovsem ne tot, chto prezhde.
Teper' ya arestant,
I vot konets nadezhde.
V kakoy-to yame, kak medved',
Khozhu vperyod, nazad,
A nebo! Luchshe ne smotret'.
Ya nebu zdes' ne rad.
V kakoy-to yame, kak medved',
Khozhu vperyod, nazad.

Za chto Tï pechal' mne etu prinyos?
Skazhi, vsemogushchiy Bozhe.
O szhal'sya, szhal'sya! V glazakh moikh netu slyoz,
Na masku litso pokhozhe.

Tï vidish', skol'ko neschastnïkh serdets
Pod svodom tyuremnïm b'yotsya!
Sorvi zhe s menya ternovïy venets,
Ne to on mne v mozg vop'yotsya.

Den' konchilsya. Lampa nad golovoyu
Gorit, okruzhonnaya t'moy.
Vsyo tikho. Nas v kamere tolko dvoye:
Ya i rassudok moy.

8 Réponse des Cosaques Zaporogues au Sultan de Constantinople / Otvet zaporozhskikh kazakov konstantinopol'skomu sultanu
Guillaume Apollinaire / Mikhail Kudinov

Tï prestupney Varravï v sto raz.
S Vel'zevulom zhivya po sosedstvu,
V samïkh merzkikh grekhakh tï pogryaz.
Nechistotami vskormlennïy s detstva,
Znay: svoy shabash tï spravish' bez nas.

Rak protukhshiy, Salonik otbrosï,
Skvernïy son, chto nel'zya rasskazat',
Okrivevshiy, gniloy i beznosïy,
Tï rodilsya, kogda tvoya mat'
Izvivalas' v korchakh ponosa.

No, here I no longer
feel I'm myself.
I'm number fifteen
in block eleven.
Every morning I pace
around a pit, like a bear.
We go round and round and round again.
The sky is blue like a chain.
Every morning I pace
around a pit, like a bear.

What will become of me, o God,
you who know my pain,
you who gave it to me?
Take pity on my dry eyes, my pallor...

And on all those poor hearts beating in prison.
Love, my companion,
take pity above all on my feeble wits
and this despair that's overpowering them.

The day is dying, see how a lamp
is burning in the prison.
We are alone in my cell,
fair light, beloved reason.

8 Reply of the Zaparogue Cossacks to the Sultan of Constantinople

More criminal than Barabbas,
horned like fallen angels,
what Beelzebub are you there below,
nourished on mud and filth?
We shall not come to your sabbaths.

Putrid fish of Salonica,
long chain of nightmarish slumber,
eyes gouged out with the tip of a pike.
Your mother passed wind half-heartedly
and you were born from her colic.

Zloy palach Podol'ya, vzglyani:
Ves' tï v ranakh, yazvakh i strup'yakh.
Zad kobïlï, rïlo svin'i,
Pust' tebe vse snadob'ya skupyat,
Chtob lechil tï bolyachki svoi!

9 O Del'vig, Delvig!
Wilhelm Kuchelbecker (1797-1846)

O Del'vig, Del'vig! Chto nagrada
I del vïsokikh i stikhov?
Talantu chto i gde otrada
Sredi zlodeyev i gluptsov?

V ruke surovoy Yuvenala
Zlodeyam groznïy bich svistit
I krasku gonit s ikh lanit,
I vlast' tiranov zadrozhala.

O Del'vig, Del'vig! Chto gonen'ya?
Bessmertiye ravno udel
I smelïkh vdokhnovennïkh del
I sladostnogo pesnopen'ya.
Tak ne umryot i nash soyuz,
Svobodnïy, radostnïy i gordïy!
I v schast'i i v neschast'i tvyordïy,
Soyuz lyubimtsev vechnïkh muz!

10 Der Tod des Dichters / Smert' poeta
Rainer Maria Rilke (1875-1926) / T. Silman

Poet bïl myortv. Litso yego, khranya
vsyo tu zhe blednost', chto-to otvergalo,
ono kogda-to vsyo o mire znalo,
no eto znan'ye ugasalo.
i vozvrashchalos' v ravnodush'ye dnya.

Gde im ponyat', kak dolog etot put';
o, mir i on—vsyo bïlo tak yedino:
ozyora i ushchel'ya, i ravnina
yego litsa i sostavlyali sut'.

Butcher of Podolia, lover
of wounds, of ulcers, of scabs,
pig's snout, mare's arse,
hold on tight to all your money
to pay for your medicines.

9 O, Delvig, Delvig!

O, Delvig, Delvig, what is the reward
for poems and noble deeds?
What comfort is there, and where, for talent that lives
among villains and fools?

In Juvenal's harsh hand
the sound of a whip threatens the villains,
and drains blood away from their faces,
and the tyrants' power diminishes.

O, Delvig, Delvig, what is persecution?
Bold inspired deeds
and sweet songs
are destined for immortality!
And so our union will not die,
liberated, joyous, and proud!
Equally strong in happiness and sorrow,
the union of those who are loved by the immortal muse!

10 The death of the poet

He was lying. His uptilted face
had been pale and unconsenting among the steep pillows
since the world and this knowing-about-it –
ripped away from his senses –
had reverted to the indifferent year.

Those who saw him living did not know
how very much he was one with all of this;
for this – these depths, these meadows
and these waters – were his visage and vision.

brass, while fragments from the first theme on cor anglais gradually fade out against a softly enveloping gong stroke.

The second movement begins with a rhapsodic theme whose initial four-note motif proves a constant presence. This first theme soon graduates across strings and then woodwind, interspersed by more incisive gestures which provoke a tensile outburst from brass and timpani. The latter's rhythm duly underpins the second theme, a graceful though notably restive melody for violins that takes in flutes and solo horn before building to a further brief outburst again dispersed by brass and timpani before fading out on horns and pizzicato strings. The first theme then re-emerges as a fugal interplay between strings, gaining in textural intricacy and expressive intensity before being stopped short by woodwind, whose lucid dialogue acts as transition into the return of the second theme, now intoned resolutely by horns over a three-note accompaniment from woodwind. Theme and accompaniment move to woodwind and strings before subsiding into the coda – the first theme being heard over a 'walking bass' in lower strings with a mesmeric ostinato pattern on percussion.

The third movement starts with a deadpan theme for bassoon over a funereal tread in double basses. As other woodwind continue this theme, the mood becomes more ironic and animated – with strings at length entering incisively to drive the theme through to a monumental climax on full orchestra. This dies down to reveal a melody of some eloquence on violins over a rhythmic accompaniment on lower strings, before the initial theme returns modified on woodwind and then lower strings over timpani. Oscillating woodwind cries emerge against a gruff response from double basses, bringing about the second part of the movement: a toccata of unremitting momentum that is confirmed by the animated theme on strings. Its contrapuntal interplay reduces to ceaselessly alternating phrases on woodwind and strings, then to interlocking string ostinatos of almost minimalist cast, before the previous activity resumes and an energetic climax for the whole orchestra ensues – angry gestures being traded as the tension subsides over a propulsive three-note motif on lower brass and strings. There follows what amounts to an extended 'divertissement' in which elements of the themes heard so far are presented as a succession of guises that range from the sardonic to the playful – beginning with a whimsical polka for flutes and piccolos over strings and harp which presently alights on a lilting idea for horn and strings against chirruping woodwind. The mood lightens before hectic strings usher in a galop whose theme is heard on bassoon then xylophone with a brusque response from the strings each time. A folk-like idea on trombone briefly intervenes before the section leads into an artful waltz for woodwind over pizzicato strings, gaining impetus as strings engage in quiet activity that provokes a brief climax then a knockabout response from the trombone. This finally mutates into a pensive theme for woodwind which, after an allusion to the lilting idea heard earlier, moves to violins and violas over a chugging accompaniment on lower strings. The music hesitantly takes on a feeling of inward resolution as activity dies out across strings and an expectant pause ensues.

At which point (20'30") a striding motion on both sets of timpani suddenly explodes into a fusillade that underpins a peroration as overwhelming as it is inexorable. On three occasions an impassioned fanfare from brass is answered by a granitic chorale on horns and strings, with the fourth fanfare bringing a strenuous confrontation between all sections of the orchestra. This heads into the climactic fifth fanfare, whereupon the music literally blows itself apart as a percussive onslaught cancels out what went before and a quietly pulsating motion sets in on bassoons and double basses. The head motif of this movement's initial theme is variously intoned by horn, flute and muted trumpet – marked off by ominous woodwind chords and recollections of the eloquent theme on upper strings – before lower strings sink down in a mood of stoic resignation and violins quietly sustain a chord of acute anguish. Pulsating timpani and a somnolently repeating celesta pattern are duly curtailed to leave just the vast expressive gulf between strings that itself evanesces into silence.

Following an early performance of the internationally

Kondrashin and the Moscow Philharmonic made the first commercial recording between the 3rd and 15th February 1962 at the Large Hall of the Moscow Conservatoire, followed by Ormandy and the Philadelphia in February 1963. Doubtless reflecting its respected though still equivocal standing, there were no further recordings until André Previn and the Chicago Symphony in February 1977, followed by Bernard Haitink and the London Philharmonic in January 1979, then Rozhdestvensky and the USSR Ministry of Culture Symphony Orchestra early during 1986 – by which time the work had all but entered the repertoire and was regarded among the seminal twentieth-century symphonies.

The *Fourth Symphony* is scored for the most extensive forces of any Shostakovich symphony: two piccolos, four flutes, four flutes (one doubling cor anglais), five clarinets, bass clarinet, three bassoons and contra-bassoon, eight horns, four trumpets, three trombones and two tubas, six timpani (two players) and percussion (six players), celesta, two harps and strings (84 desks recommended). The first movement is a complex and unpredictable take on sonata-form design, while its successor deftly elides between scherzo and intermezzo, then the finale integrates four disparate yet audibly related sections in an imaginative process of variation which culminates in one of its composer's most far-reaching apotheoses.

The first movement opens with a shrill fanfare-like motif on woodwind with brass and percussion, thrice repeated, that reappears transformed at the start of each of its successors. Here it heads into a trenchant martial theme for brass over tramping strings, making reference to the initial motif at its height before it subsides – via echoing horns and animated strings, into the leisurely second theme whose imitative unfolding on strings is countered with ominous responses from woodwind and percussion. Brass now initiates a strenuous interplay drawing on both themes, which reaches a powerful climax before subsiding as before into lower woodwind. A capricious episode for upper woodwind, over a syncopated accompaniment on pizzicato strings and timpani, concludes with a soft woodwind dissonance – from which protesting strings build to a violently dissonant outburst from full orchestra. As this echoes into silence, lower strings underpin the third theme – a sombre melody for bassoon, rounded off by lilting harps, which expands across the strings as it gains in expressive plangency; a curiously ambivalent dialogue for harps, woodwind and muted strings then functioning as the codetta to this extended exposition. Solo horn intoning of the third theme against bird-like woodwind calls initiates the development, building to a waspish confrontation of woodwind and muted trumpets before strings increase the tension into a spiralling ascent on brass and strings – these latter persisting in a heated dialogue that grinds to a deadening halt.

From here (13'30") upper woodwind begin a lively discussion of the first theme which soon takes in elements from the third theme on lower woodwind together with sardonic phrases from brass and percussion. At length this activity alights on a series of nonchalant chords, whereupon violins launch a furious fugato on the first theme that presently involves all of the strings then woodwind and brass in an inexorable build-up to the principal climax: one which draws on the whole orchestra in a seismic unleashing of physical force. Angry brass then unexpectedly waltz-like strings lead away from this climax towards a quietly dissonant woodwind chord that remains sphinx-like until a general pause is reached. From here six crescendoing chords, each more thunderous than the last, build to the heightened return of the initial motif as at the very opening – though now the tramping strings underpin a defiant version of the third theme from trumpets and upper woodwind. This dies down into a more eloquent discussion of that theme on woodwind, after which bird-like calls on violin presage the latter's taking up the second theme over lower strings and harp. It dies away disconsolately, only for the first theme to emerge on bassoon over a steady accompaniment on bass drum. Cor anglais partners it in the closing stages, while a sudden eruption on this theme from clarinets, muted trumpets and harps denotes the onset of the brief coda. Ejaculatory chords from woodwind and pizzicato strings freeze into an acrid harmony on woodwind and

Litso yego i bïlo tem prostorom,
chto tyanetsya k nemu i tshchetno l'nyot,
a eta maska robkaya umryot,
otkrïto predostavlennaya vzoram,
na tlen'ye obrechyonnïy nezhnïy plod.

11 Schlußstück / Zaklyucheniye
Rainer Maria Rilke / T. Silman

Vsevlastna smert'.
Ona na strazhe
I v schast'ya chas.
V mig vïsshey zhizhni ona v nas strazhdet,
Zhdyot nas i zhazhdet
I plachet v nas.

Oh, his visage and vision was this whole wide-open space,
which as yet still wants to go to him and woos him,
and his mask, now dying in trepidation,
is tender and open, like the inside
of a fruit going bad through contact with the air.

11 Conclusion

Death is great.
We are his
when our mouths are filled with laughter.
When we think we are in the midst of life,
he dares to weep
in our midst.

Russian transliterations: Anastasia Belina-Johnson
English translations of the original French, Spanish, German and Russian texts by Susannah Howe (tracks 1-8); Anastasia Belina-Johnson (track 9); Susan Baxter (tracks 10-11)

Symphony No. 15, Op. 141 (1971)
(CD 2: 8.572708)

Vasily Petrenko: *The final symphony is so fascinating, so controversial. I've known musicologists who were close to him in his last years, and say he was actually very optimistic. He'd gone through a great fear of death and come out the other side. Most of the symphony was dreamed up in hospital, and written down at home. It's a little like Prokofiev's* Seventh Symphony*, about childhood; he said it was a "toy shop", but what a macabre one! We hear hospital equipment, electric shock treatment, vulgarity and satire; he brings in serialism, a vast array of quotations – everything from Rossini's* William Tell *to Mahler's* Fourth Symphony *– which come across like the crazy voices in your head when you are delirious. And then comes the music from* Götterdammerung*: in Russian the title is translated as "Death of the Gods", not "Twilight of the Gods", and it could also be translated as "Condemnation of the Gods". What did he mean? He left us no clues, but wrote to his friend Isaak Glikman: "I don't myself quite know why the quotations are there, but I could not, could not, not include them."*

I feel he is recording a half-conscious state. The web of quotes from his own pieces is complex; they are reversed and converted, and he keeps coming back to his Symphony No. 4*. Near the end we sense the world rippling and dissolving – there's an understanding that it's time to go. In the twitching ending are we hearing the death of all illusions?*

The two years between the *Fourteenth* and *Fifteenth Symphonies* produced several varied works, not least the eight fervent choral ballads to texts by Yevgeny

Dolmatovsky that comprise *Loyalty* and the austere score for Grigory Kozintsev's *King Lear* that was Shostakovich's last film project. The *Thirteenth Quartet* [8.550977], whose single movement finds the composer at his most formally ingenious and expressively uncompromising, preceded the upbeat *March of the Soviet Militia* for wind band and a second orchestration of *Six Romances* on *Verses of English* (sic) *Poets* whose austerity is very different from the first version of three decades earlier.

Shostakovich seems to have made preparatory sketches for his *Fifteenth Symphony* early in April 1971, then wrote the work during concentrated activity at Kurgan (where he received treatment for a still undiagnosed illness that caused gradual weakening of his right arm) and at the composers' residency in Repino. The piece was completed there on 29th July, but a second heart attack led to postponement of its première from October until the next year. That première was entrusted to his son Maxim, who conducted the All-Union Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra in Moscow on 8th January 1972. Critical and public response was notably enthusiastic, as also when Yevgeny Mravinsky gave the Leningrad première on 5th May (his first of a major work by Shostakovich since the *Twelfth Symphony* over a decade earlier) and at the British première, when Maxim conducted the New Philharmonia Orchestra in London on 20th November with the composer present.

Maxim Shostakovich made the first recording early in 1972, followed that October by Eugene Ormandy with the Philadelphia Orchestra and Kyrill Kondrashin with the Moscow Philharmonic in May 1974. Milan Horvat recorded it with the Austrian Radio Symphony in 1977, while 1978 brought two notable recordings (in March and May/June respectively) by the London Philharmonic with Bernard Haitink and the Berlin Symphony with Kurt Sanderling. Thereafter it has had frequent performances and recordings, conductors no doubt fascinated by its sheer contrasts in scoring and expression as well as those quotations real or imagined that permeate the music.

The *Fifteenth Symphony* is scored for two each of woodwind (with piccolo), four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, celesta, percussion (four players) and strings. It marks a return to an abstract four-movement entity after eighteen years, though the conception of form in each of these is anything but conventional.

The first movement opens with two chimes on the glockenspiel, then over pizzicato strings solo flute unfolds a capricious theme which is continued by bassoon as the music gains in animation. What amounts to a second theme is stated matter-of-factly by trumpet and passed to other wind and brass, then trumpets sound the galop theme from Rossini's *William Tell Overture* that alternates with scurrying strings as the end of the exposition is reached. The development now sets off with trumpet fanfares over side drum, percussion coming to the fore as activity increases heading into a strenuous string fugato derived from the first theme. This is curtailed by bass drum and, after an allusion to the second theme on solo violin, strings initiate a fugal texture of mounting complexity with all twelve notes of the chromatic scale gradually brought into play. Trumpets and side drum emerge at its height, inducing a climactic reprise of the main theme which dies down menacingly in the brass, after which further soloistic comments and a return of the *William Tell* motif on trumpets herald a restatement of the first theme with its successor transformed into a circus-like parade across the orchestra. This heads into the coda with a brief polyphonic build-up on woodwind and last Rossini allusion before the curt final phrase.

The second movement opens with a baleful chorale for brass, followed by an eloquent cello soliloquy against rapt strings. Both chorale and soliloquy are repeated to heightened effect, before a variant of the chorale sees the cello merge into a sequence of dissonant twelve-note chords on woodwind and brass. These lead first into a chant-like motif on flutes then a funereal trombone monologue which alternates with the chant motif, both being repeated and intensified before the return of the solo cello and the dissonant chords. There then erupts a massive climax based on the trombone monologue, with the whole orchestra brought into play for the only time in this movement. Dying down on the lower brass and timpani, it makes way – via the chant and chordal ideas –

numerous of these scores were freely transferred, certain pieces – not least the *First Jazz Suite* [8.555949] – becoming 'hits' in their own right. A more serious side was evident in the *Six Romances on Japanese Poems* and, above all, *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* – the opera after Nikolay Leskov that saw success in Leningrad and Moscow, and acclaim in Cleveland and London, before the infamous *Pravda* article that decided both its fate and that of Shostakovich's future career. He had already re-engaged with abstract composition – composing the *24 Preludes* for piano [8.555781] and the *First Piano Concerto* [8.553126] in 1933, then a *Cello Sonata* [8.557231 or 8.557722] in 1934, during which year he also began a new symphony.

Shostakovich had long intended to consolidate the promise of his *First Symphony* [8.572396] with a more inclusive statement than either of its successors, though deciding how to do so was no easy task. His first attempt in the autumn of 1934 got no further than the seven-minute fragment of a first movement, whose brooding slow introduction for solo woodwind and strings followed by an energetic tutti (partially reused in the completed work's finale) suggests Myaskovsky as a viable mentor, but Shostakovich may have felt this approach insufficiently forward-looking. By April 1935 he was speaking of the new symphony as embodying his artistic 'credo', though the first evidence was *Five Fragments* for chamber orchestra [8.557812] written at a single session on 9th June (and which remained unheard for nearly three decades), whose striking sonorities and textures anticipate what was to come. Work began in earnest on 13th September, with the first movement complete in all essentials by early December and its successor at the turn of January 1936. In spite of the condemnatory *Pravda* article 'Muddle Instead of Music' on the 28th of that month, Shostakovich outwardly recovered quickly from the attendant fall-out – finishing the finale's short score on 26th April and its orchestration by 20th May. Word had already spread of the work's epic scale and emotional scope, with Otto Klemperer responding to the composer's playing extracts on 31st May by pledging to perform it in South America the following season. The première itself was entrusted to Fritz Stiedry and the Leningrad Philharmonic, and scheduled for 11th December. That morning, however, brought an official announcement that the composer had withdrawn the work as it was now incompatible with his current creative concerns.

Just what were the events conspiring to seal the work's fate have been much debated but it seems that, having rehearsed the first two movements without much in the way of incident, Stiedry encountered overt antagonism from the musicians during the finale to an extent that Shostakovich, having spoken to the conductor, chose to avoid a potential scandal by literally taking the score with him as he left the building – though it is also likely the orchestra's director Isai Renzin had prevailed upon the composer to withdraw the piece before his hand was forced by 'official' pressure. After this, the symphony was shelved though not forgotten – Shostakovich and Pavel Lamm having already made a reduction for two pianos that was circulated and even lithographed in 1946, after a private performance by the composer and Mieczysław Weinberg. The full score had been lost – presumed destroyed – in the siege of Leningrad several years earlier, but was subsequently reconstructed from the orchestral parts by Boris Shalman and its performance mooted at various stages in the post-Stalin era until, in 1961, Kyrill Kondrashin (having seen a piano duet reduction by the composer's amanuensis Lev Atovmyan) undertook the task. Despite having spoken on several occasions about revising the work, Shostakovich pointedly chose to leave it just as it was: an all-encompassing, even reckless yet magnificent statement of artistic intent.

This belated première, by Kondrashin and the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra in Moscow on 30th December 1961, was followed by the UK première from Gennady Rozhdestvensky and the Philharmonia Orchestra at the Edinburgh Festival on 7th September 1962 (programmed with and greatly preferred to the *Twelfth Symphony*), with the American première by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra following in Philadelphia on 15th February 1963.

Pervoye Maya nashe—
V budushcheye parusa—
Vzvilo nad morem pashen'
Gulkiye korpusa.
Novïye korpusa—novaya polosa Maya,
Ognyami b'yushchego budushchemu v glaza,
Fabriki i kolonii,
Mayskiy vzmetnoym parad.

Zemlyu sozhmoym kolenkami—
Nasha prishla pora.
Slushayte, proletarii, nashikh zavodov rech',
Vam podzhigaya staroye, novuyu yav' zazhech'.

Solntse znamyon podnimaya,
Marsh, zagremi v ushakh.
Kazhdoye pervoye Maya
K sotsializmu shag.
Pervoye Maya—shag
Szhavshikh vintovku shakht.
V ploshchadi, revolyutsiya,
Vbey milionnïm shag.

Our First of May—
The sails of our future—
Unfurled over the fields
Its resonant hulls.
New corps—new ranks of May,
Challenging the future with fire.
Factories and colonies,
Let us organise a May parade.

We will hold the Earth between our knees—
Our time has come.
Listen, proletariat, to the speeches of our factories,
By burning down the old, you will kindle a new reality.

The sun of the banners is rising,
And a march will ring in our ears.
Every First of May
Will be another step to Socialism.
First of May—a step of the miners,
Tightly holding their rifles.
To the town squares, revolution,
March with steps of millions!

Symphony No. 4, Op. 43 (1935-36)
(CD 3: 8.573188)

Vasily Petrenko: *It's so clear from the* Fourth *that Shostakovich had immersed himself in Mahler, studying instrumentation, an extended type of orchestration. It's the most amazing work, the way he creates the texture and noise of industrialisation; you can hear the machines, the effort of the labour. Then he unleashes a terrifying, frenzied brutality and, at the end, spiritual devastation which leads towards a complete unknown. The finale is like some kind of surrealist nightmare: we can hear clearly the Party at work, the circus, crazy officials, drunk policeman and people confessing to crimes they haven't committed – the insanity and alienation of the time. Then comes the coda and we arrive in C major, the tonality of the dead. But it moves into C minor: that means (to me) that he was not ready to die yet, but there might be no future. I think the* Fourth *is actually a masterpiece, and competes with the* Fourteenth *as his best.*

The six-year period between the *Third* and *Fourth Symphonies* (the second longest between any in the composer's canon) saw Shostakovich focussing on music for the theatre, with several innovative scores for films – notably those for Grigory Kozintsev's and Leonid Trauberg's *Alone* [Naxos 8.570316] and Lev Arshtam's *The Girlfriends* – as well as incidental music for Adrian Pyotrovsky's *Rule, Britannia!* [both on 8.572138] and Nikolay Akimov's controversial production of *Hamlet*. There were also full-length ballet collaborations – with Alexander Ivanovsky on *The Golden Age* [8.570217-18], Viktor Smirnov on *The Bolt* [*Suite* on 8.555949] and Fyodor Lopukhov on *The Limpid Stream*. Extracts from to a restatement of the chorale in block harmony on strings. A haunting passage featuring celesta and strings leads to the chorale variant on strings then brass, thence to the spectral final bars on brass and timpani.

The third movement begins (or rather its predecessor ends) with portentous chords on bassoons, preparing for a sardonic theme on clarinets then solo violin whose barbed humour belies its formal and motivic poise. This is taken up animatedly by strings and woodwind before a trio section launches on brass and percussion, also taking in a stealthy theme for violin then woodwind with lively percussion asides. The latter comes to the fore in a transition that hints at without stating the first theme, which re-emerges just prior to the close when solo violin quizzically recalls it and the second theme prior to a nonchalant exchange for percussion and strings.

The fourth movement begins with twin Wagner quotations – brass intoning the 'fate' motif from *The Valkyrie* followed by the timpani rhythm from *Siegfried's Funeral March*. These are repeated, the former a third time, before the tempo increases with a graceful theme on upper strings over pizzicato accompaniment. While this alludes to the 'fate' motif, its progress is essentially unruffled as it continues on woodwind and then appears in richer string harmonies, before syncopated brass chords lead into a more ambivalent theme for woodwind then strings in dialogue. The music dies down as the 'fate' motif emerges and pulsating timpani usher in on pizzicato strings the last and perhaps most imaginative of the composer's symphonic passacaglias. Whether or not this derives from the 'war' theme in the *Seventh Symphony*, its rôle here is to provide an unyielding backdrop against which the rest of the orchestra comes into focus. Thus the woodwind and strings gradually appear with fragmentary ideas that presently assume greater substance then, after an evocative passage for solo horn over strings and celesta, tension accumulates remorselessly into the central climax in which the passacaglia theme is hammered out by brass against protesting strings and percussion, and culminating in a nine-note chord whose corrosive dissonance spreads outwards as the passacaglia finally dissolves on lower strings. The two earlier themes are then reprised in reverse order, the graceful theme running up against the second movement's dissonant chords which, after a recall of the passacaglia theme, lead into the coda. Here, allusions to the first movement's main theme on woodwind interact with intricate percussion latticework and the passacaglia theme on timpani against a chord of sphinx-like immobility on the strings. This latter is the last sound to be heard, fading out after tuned percussion imparts its fleeting benediction to this leave-taking.

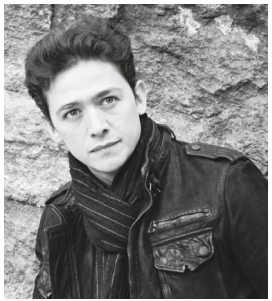
During his last four years, Shostakovich released no more symphonies but managed to complete a further six works. Thus the inward lyricism of the *Fourteenth Quartet* and the otherworldly deliberation of the *Fifteenth Quartet* [both 8.550976] were interspersed with the fragile beauty of *Six Poems of Maria Tsvetaeva* and the ominous ruminations of *Suite on Verses of Michelangelo Buonarroti* (whose subsequent orchestral version the composer apparently referred to as his 'Sixteenth Symphony', though reports that he had completed two movements of a purely instrumental such work continued to circulate for several years following his death). The grimly sardonic *Four Verses of Captain Lebyadkin* (a figure invented by Dostoevsky) was followed by the *Viola Sonata* [8.557231], which ends with a transcendent *Adagio* 'in memory of Beethoven'. Four days after correcting proofs of this work from his hospital bed, Dmitry Shostakovich died in Moscow on 9th August 1975.

Booklet notes by Richard Whitehouse

Gal James

After completing her studies at the the opera studio of the Staatsoper Berlin, Israeli soprano Gal James joined Oper Graz where her repertoire has included the title-rôle in Puccini's *Manon Lescaut*, Desdemona in Verdi's *Otello*, Chrysothemis in Strauss's *Elektra*, Eva in Wagner's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnber*g, Marguerite in Gounod's *Faust* and Donna Anna in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*. Other opera engagements include Mimì in Puccini's *La Bohème* at the Palau de la Música in Valencia and the title-rôle in *Rusalka* at the Semperoper Dresden. On the concert platform highlights have included the *Vier letzte Lieder* of Richard Strauss with the Oslo Philharmonic and Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestras, Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 14* with the Sinfonieorchester St Gallen and the Netherlands Chamber Orchestra, Mendelssohn's *Elias* with the Berlin Philharmonic, and *Psalm 42* with the Stavanger Symphony Orchestra, and Bernstein's *Jeremiah Symphony* and Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* with the Bochumer Symphony Orchestra. Gal James has worked with renowned conductors such as Daniel Barenboim, Seiji Ozawa, Neeme Järvi, Steven Sloane, Julien Salemkour, Vasily Petrenko, Riccardo Chailly, Ion Marin, Dan Ettinger and Jukka-Pekka Saraste.

Alexander Vinogradov



Born in Moscow, Alexander Vinogradov made his début at the Bolshoy Theatre at the age of 21 as Oroveso in *Norma*. He has worked with many leading conductors including Gustavo Dudamel, Daniel Barenboim, Kent Nagano, Vladimir Jurowski, Lorin Maazel, Mariss Jansons, Placido Domingo, Valery Gergiev, Philippe Jordan, Yuri Temirkhanov, Vasily Petrenko, Helmuth Rilling, Zubin Mehta and Myung-Whun Chung. He has won numerous competitions. Recent performances include Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass* with Sir Mark Elder and the Hallé Orchestra in San Sebastián, Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 13* at the Paris Opera with Philippe Yordan, Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 14* with Vasily Petrenko and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* with the Pittsburgh Symphony and Shostakovich's *Song of the Forests* with the Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias (OSPA), *Don Carlo* and *Eugene Onegin* at the Teatro Regio di Torino and *Attila* (title rôle) at St Gallen Opera. He has also recorded songs by Rachmaninov with pianist Iain Burnside for the Delphian label. Alexander Vinogradov has appeared at many Festivals and Opera Houses around the world, and with leading orchestra. He currently lives in Berlin, Germany, where he also teaches singing at the Hochschule für Musik Hanns Eisler. He continues to study with Svetlana Nesterenko.

Shostakovich's output. When he resumed this manner of writing (in his *Fourth Symphony*), it was within a very different musical context and from a much-changed cultural perspective.

Such expressiveness proves unable to take hold, and a running pattern in the strings marks the onset of a 'scherzo' that gains in momentum before climaxing in a syncopated idea which makes its way across the orchestra in all guises of instrumentation. The music grows theatrical in its immediacy, switching ceaselessly between motifs and taking in a full-blooded theme on strings, before the syncopated idea reaches a resplendent apotheosis. This is cancelled-out by a side-drum tattoo, over which unison strings and brass unfurl stern declamations marked by bass-drum strokes. At length these strokes lead towards silence, the tattoo fading to a dejected response from lower strings and tuba.

What follows is an extended introduction to the 'finale' (and most likely modelled on the Intervention of the Prince music from the 'Introduction' to Berlioz's *Roméo et Juliette*). Upwards string glissandi alternate with fanfares on trombones and trumpets, the latter taking precedence as the music gains impetus and climaxes on a unison chord for full brass.

Although the choral peroration has no overt connection with what has gone before, it provides an appropriate ending. Kirsanov's verse, firmly in the lineage of 'revolutionary' poems, is set so that the unison chorus alternates with passages for male then female voices. There is little space for any emotional progression: rather the music surges forward to a climactic statement of intent: after which, trumpets and strings sound a defiant recessional on their way to the final, triumphantly conclusive cadence.

Simfoniya 3 'Pervoye Maya'

Text by Semyon Kirsanov (1906-1972)

1 V pervoye, pervoye Maya,
Broshen v bïloye blesk,
Iskrï v ogon' razdavaya,
Plamya pokrïlo lesa.

Ukhom ponikshikh yolok
Vslushivalis' lesa
V yunïkh eshchyo mayovok
Shorokhi, golosa.

Nashe Pervoye Maya,
V posviste pul' gorya,
Shtïk i nagan szhimaya,
Bralo dvorets tsarya.

Pavshiy dvorets tsarya—
Eto yeshcho zarya Maya,
Vperoyd idushchego,
Svetom znamoyn gorya.

Symphony No. 3 'The First of May'

English translation by Anastasia Belina

1 On the first day of May
The past was lit up with a flame,
Sparks grew into a fire,
And the fire enveloped the forests.

The forests were listening
Through the ears of pine trees
To the noises and voices
Of young May parades.

Our First of May,
Burning in the hail of bullets,
Grasping the gun and bayonet,
Stormed the Tsar's palace.

Fallen palace of the Tsar—
It is only the dawn of May,
Which marches forward
In the light of its banners.

Symphony No. 3 'The First of May', Op. 20 (1929) (CD 1: 8.572396)

Vasily Petrenko: *The* Second *and* Third Symphonies *are very difficult to perform properly and it took me a long time to work out how to make them feel logical. They need to settle in your mind. By the* Third *you feel he's really starting to be very ironic about the text and about the message. The poetry he uses is banal, amateur, and he's mocking it – showing how absurd and empty the words were.*

The two years between the *Second* and *Third Symphonies* saw a number of pieces, from the transcription of two Scarlatti sonatas for wind ensemble and *Tahiti Trot* (both 1927, the latter [Naxos 8.555949] an orchestration of Vincent Youmans' *Tea for Two*), via incidental music for Vladimir Mayakovsky's *The Bedbug* (1929), to *The Nose* (1928), Shostakovich's first opera and his most radical yet impressive work of this period; also a score for Grigoriy Kozintsev's and Leonid Trauberg's film *New Babylon* (1929), marking the start of a long-term collaboration.

Shostakovich wrote his *Third Symphony 'The First of May'* during the summer of 1929, much of it while on a six-week cruise along the Black Sea coast. Like its predecessor this is a one-movement work with a choral 'finale' (the text belatedly provided by Semyon Kirsanov), both being instalments of an intended symphonic cycle inspired by dates on the revolutionary calendar that was then abandoned. Following the 'struggle' inherent in the earlier symphony, this one focuses on what the composer referred to as "the festive spirit of peaceful construction" and is accordingly less complex in idiom but not in technical demands. Boris Asafyev wrote of its having been fashioned from the fervour of the revolutionary spirit.

The piece was well received at its première in Moscow, Alexander Gauk conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra and the Academic Cappella, on 21st January 1930, the Leningrad première following on 6th November 1931. Leopold Stokowski gave the American première in Philadelphia on 30th December 1932, while Frederick Stock introduced it to Chicago on 19th January 1933 (on both occasions with the choral writing omitted). The work then fell into oblivion and was not revived until 1964. That performance, by the Leningrad Philharmonic with Igor Blazhkov, became the first recording, followed by Morton Gould with the Royal Philharmonic in 1968, Kirill Kondrashin with the Moscow Philharmonic in 1972 and Václav Smetáček with the Czech Radio Symphony in 1974.

The *Third Symphony* is scored for SATB chorus, woodwind in pairs (one piccolo), four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (four players) and strings. Although its single movement plays continuously, a four-movement trajectory is easily discernible. Shostakovich spoke around the time of its completion of his desire to create a symphony where no single theme was repeated – and succeeded to the extent that, despite its abundance of melodic ideas, there is no exact or literal repetition of any theme during the course of the work.

It opens with a ruminative dialogue for clarinets over pizzicato strings, the introduction to a 'first movement' moving rapidly from a stealthy trumpet, via circling woodwind and impetuous strings, to breathless exchanges between instrumental groups that alternate with strident passages for full orchestra. The second of these brings a climactic pause, after which the music continues with unabated energy, slowing latterly for a noble theme on strings borne by striding woodwind. The activity continues with exchanges centred on a repeated-note idea which is taken up by brass and hurtles to an aggressive climax that collides with a march-past for brass and side drum. This alternates with perky woodwind passages as the music loses its impetus, fading away in lower strings to leave sparse chords from timpani and double basses.

Above them, violins in their highest register initiate a 'slow movement' that, following a stark outburst from brass and percussion, unfolds as a speculative dialogue between upper and lower strings, offset at first by ironic brass comments then by folk-like woodwind exchanges, before gaining in expressive warmth and assuming a Mahlerian aura for probably the first time in

Huddersfield Choral Society


Photo: Huddersfield Examiner

The Huddersfield Choral Society was founded in 1836. Under distinguished principal conductors and chorusmasters it has developed an international reputation. Its special quality is the unique 'Huddersfield Sound' – a full-bodied and blended yet flexible tone. The Society promotes its own concert series in Huddersfield Town Hall. Recent invitations to perform outside Huddersfield have ranged from Britten's *War Requiem* in Porto and Valladolid, and Vaughan Williams's *A Sea Symphony* in Antwerp and the Orkneys, to Havergal Brian's mammoth *Gothic Symphony* at the 2011 BBC Proms. In 2012 the Society made two appearances at the BBC Proms: Berlioz's *Grande Messe des morts* under Thierry Fischer, and a concert with the BBC Concert Orchestra under Keith Lockhart to celebrate seventy years of the BBC radio programme *Desert Island Discs*.

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Choir

Founded in 1840, the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Choir has always been central to the life of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic. Its repertoire covers all periods and styles from Bach to newly commissioned works, with full symphony orchestra and *a cappella,* and it also plays a leading rôle in the famous Royal Liverpool Philharmonic *Spirit of Christmas* Carol Concerts. As well as performing in many British concert venues, the Choir has appeared in the BBC Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, including a televised performance of Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* in 2005. The Choir has toured to Spain, France, Germany and the Netherlands. Among the Choir's many recordings are Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius,* Vaughan Williams' *A Sea Symphony* and *Serenade to Music* and Howells' *Hymnus Paradisi* with Vernon Handley, Finzi's *Intimations of Immortality* with Richard Hickox, Beethoven's *Symphony No. 9* with Sir Charles Mackerras, *Paul McCartney's Liverpool Oratorio* with Carl Davis, and Shostakovich's *Symphonies Nos. 2* and *3* with Vasily Petrenko. Ian Tracey has been Chorusmaster of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Choir since 1985.

accrued fervency bringing a declamation of 'Struggle' at the close of that verse. An orchestral interlude, based on revolving patterns from the woodwind and brass, leads to a third verse that is initially centered on 'Struggle' as the music builds to a massive chordal statement on 'October'. A brief recollection of the hectic activity encountered earlier ushers in the final verse, now permeated by reiterations of 'October' as another affirmative chord is reached. The last words – 'October, the Commune and Lenin' – are not so much spoken than shouted out as fervent exchanges between the male and female voices, after which crashing percussion brings an orchestral coda that reconciles aspects of both halves of the work in a final thunderous resolution.

Simfoniya 2 'Oktyabryu, Simfonicheskoye posvyashcheniye'

Text by Alexander Bezïmensky (1898-1973)

3 Mï shli, my prosili rabotï i khleba,
Serdtsa bïli szhatï tiskami toski,
Zavodskiye trubï tyanutsya k nebu
Kak ruki, bezsil'nïye szhat' kulaki.
Strashno bïlo imya nashikh tenyot:
Molchan'ye, stradan'ye.

No gromche orudiy vorvalis' v molchan'ye
Slova nashey skorbi.
O Lenin:
Tï vïkoval volyu stradan'ya,
Tï vïkoval volyu mozolistïkh ruk.
Mï ponyali, Lenin, chto nasha sud'ba nosit imya:
Bor'ba! Bor'ba!

Borba! Tï vela nas k posledney voli.
Borba! Tï dala nam pobedu truda.
I etoy pobedï nad gnyotom i t'moyu
Nikto ne otnimet u nas nikogda.
Pust' kazhdïy v bor'be budet molod i khrabr.
Ved' imya pobedï Oktyabr'.

Oktyabr'! Eto solntse zhelannogo vestnik.
Oktyabr'! Eto volya vosstavshikh vekov.
Oktyabr'! Eto trud, eto radost' i pesnya.
Oktyabr'! Eto schast'ye poley i stankov.
Vot znamya Oktyabr',
Vot imya zhivïkh pokoleniy i Lenin.
Komunna i Lenin.

Symphony No. 2 'To October, A Symphonic Dedication'

English translation by Anastasia Belina

3 We marched, we asked for work and for bread,
The vice of sorrow gripped our hearts,
The factory chimneys stretched into the sky,
Like hands that were powerless to clench fists.
The terrible names of our oppression were:
Silence, suffering.

But our words of sorrow burst through the silence
Louder than the roar of weapons.
Oh, Lenin:
You forged freedom from our torment.
You forged freedom with our calloused hands.
We understood, Lenin, that our fate has only one name:
Struggle, struggle.

Struggle, you led us to the ultimate freedom.
Struggle, you gave us the victory of labour.
And no one will ever deprive us
Of this victory over oppression and darkness.
Let everyone remain young and brave in our fight.
May the name of our victory be October.

October! It is the herald of a new dawn.
October! It is the freedom of rebellious ages.
October! It is labour, joy, and song.
October! It is happiness in fields and by factory benches.
It is our banner: October.
It is the name of the new generation and Lenin,
The Commune and Lenin.

adopts a more stylized yet no less unequivocal approach to form and expression wholly typical of Leningrad in its experimental heyday.

Shostakovich possibly conceived his *Second Symphony* while correcting the proofs of its predecessor at the start of 1926. The work as it stands, however, resulted from a commission in late March the following year from the Propaganda Division of the State Music Publishers' Section for a symphonic work to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, which body also supported his intention to introduce the choral second half of the work with a factory hooter. By early June the orchestral first half was complete and the composer began setting the chosen text, by 'official' proletarian poet Alexander Bezïmensky (1898-1973), that he rated very poorly. The work was essentially completed by early July and later published with the title '*To October, a Symphonic Dedication*'; at this point, there was no mention of its being his *Second Symphony*, which term seems only to have come about at the earliest when work on its successor was under way in 1929.

Rehearsals were fraught but the première, Nikolai Malko conducting the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra and State Academic Cappella on 5th November 1927, was judged a success even by those who disliked the advanced idiom. Shostakovich made some revisions for the Moscow première on 4th December conducted by Konstantin Saradzhev and the work was additionally awarded joint second prize at a competition organized in Leningrad. Despite this success, the piece failed to establish itself in the repertory and was embargoed in the era of Socialist Realism and beyond; not to be revived until Igor Blazhkov performed it with the Leningrad Philharmonic and Krupskaya Institute Chorus on 1st November 1965, which became its first recording, while Colin Davis gave the first Western performance with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Chorus in London on 22nd October 1969. Ladisláv Slovák recorded it with the Slovak Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus in June 1967, followed by Morton Gould with the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and Chorus in October 1968 and Kyrill Kondrashin with the Moscow Philharmonic and RFSFR Academic Russian Choir during 1972, but the work has tended to receive performances and recordings only as part of integral cycles of the symphonies.

The *Second Symphony* is scored for SATB chorus, two each of woodwind (with piccolo), four horns, three each of trumpets and trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (three players) and strings. The instrumental first part consists of four contrasted sections, which the choral second part complements in its four distinct verses.

Over a barely audible bass drum roll (track 1), the strings emerge in ascending order with a freely unfolding polyphony which results in a densely swirling texture of kaleidoscopic timbres. In the midst of this a trumpet intones what is the only sustained melodic line throughout the whole work, soon joined by upper woodwind in a series of angular chords. This dies down against a sombre tuba solo, then a new section begins (track 2) with martial activity in strings and woodwind – the latter with an animated version of the trumpet idea as the music builds to a strenuous climax capped by an unexpected major chord on the full orchestra. Agitated exchanges between tuba and lower strings provoke a brief outburst that subsides into virtual stasis. From here (track 2, 1'45") the solo violin embarks on a cadenza-like passage that is rapidly joined by woodwind then strings as the texture proliferates into a complex thirteen-part 'ultra-polyphony', goaded on by percussion then trumpets and trombones prior to a martial idea that emerges on unison horns. This organized chaos is cut off at its height (track 2, 4'33") by timpani presaging a grandiose climax derived from the trumpet theme, but this quickly dies down as strings and woodwind muse uncertainly upon previous motifs before solo violin ascends precipitously into silence.

The silence is abruptly shattered (track 3) by the low-pitched hooter (which can be replaced by unison brass) and timpani, whereupon the second half commences with massed male voices. Detailed illustration of the text is eschewed for an emphasis on salient words from each of the four verses. Thus the entry of female voices (the chorus sings in rhythmic unison throughout) sees the swift build-up to 'Oppression, silence, suffering' at the end of the first verse, whence orchestral activity increases towards 'Lenin' midway through the second verse, the

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra


Photo: Mark McNulty

The award-winning Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra is the UK's oldest continuing professional symphony orchestra, dating from 1840. The dynamic young Russian, Vasily Petrenko, was appointed Principal Conductor of the orchestra in September 2006 and in September 2009 became Chief Conductor. The orchestra gives over sixty concerts each season in Liverpool Philharmonic Hall and tours widely throughout the United Kingdom and internationally, most recently touring to China, Switzerland, France, Spain, Germany, Romania and the Czech Republic. In recent seasons world première performances have included major works by Sir Peter Maxwell Davies, Sir John Tavener, Karl Jenkins, Stewart Copeland, Michael Nyman, Michael Torke, Nico Muhly and James Horner, alongside works by Liverpool-born and North West-based composers. Recent additions to the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra's extensive and critically acclaimed recording catalogue include Tchaikovsky's *Manfred Symphony* [Naxos 8.570568] (2009 Gramophone Awards Orchestral Recording of the Year), the world première performance of Sir John Tavener's *Requiem,* a complete Shostakovich symphony cycle (the recording of *Symphony No. 10* [Naxos 8.572461] was the 2011 Gramophone Awards Orchestral Recording of the Year), Rachmaninov's *Symphonic Dances*, *Symphonies Nos. 2* and *3* and *Piano Concertos Nos. 1-4* and *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* (with Simon Trpčeski), Tchaikovsky's *Piano Concerto No. 1* (also with Trpčeski) and Elgar's *Symphony No. 1*. www.liverpoolphil.com

Vasily Petrenko


Photo: Mark McNulty

Vasily Petrenko was appointed Principal Conductor of the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra in 2006 and in 2009 became Chief Conductor. He is also Chief Conductor of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Principal Guest Conductor of the Mikhailovsky Theatre of his native St Petersburg, and Chief Conductor of the European Union Youth Orchestra. He was the Classical BRIT Awards Male Artist of the Year 2010 and 2012 and the *Classic FM*/*Gramophone* Young Artist of the Year 2007. He is only the second person to have been awarded Honorary Doctorates by both the University of Liverpool and Liverpool Hope University in 2009, and an Honorary Fellowship of the Liverpool John Moores University in 2012. These awards recognise the immense impact he has had on the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra and the city's cultural scene. He works regularly with many of the world's finest orchestras, including the London Philharmonic, Philharmonia, Russian National, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia, Czech Philharmonic, Vienna Symphony, Sydney Symphony, Israel Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic and San Francisco Symphony Orchestras, the Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Orchestre de la Suisse Romande, the Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Rome, and the Rundfunk Sinfonieorchester Berlin. His wide operatic repertoire includes *Macbeth* (Glyndebourne Festival Opera), *Parsifal* and *Tosca* (RLPO), *Le Villi, I due Foscari* and *Boris Godunov* (Netherlands Reisopera), *Der fliegende Holländer, La Bohème* and *Carmen* (Mikhailovsky Theatre), *Pique Dame* (Hamburg State Opera) and *Eugene Onegin* (Opéra de Paris, Bastille). Recordings with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra include Tchaikovsky's *Manfred Symphony* [Naxos 8.570568] (2009 *Classic FM*/*Gramophone* Orchestral Recording of the Year) and other orchestral works, Elgar's *Symphony No. 1*, Shostakovich's complete symphonies, and Rachmaninov's *Symphonic Dances, Symphonies* and complete *Piano Concertos.*

by woodwind and passed to clarinet then strings as it reaches a brief climax. A step-wise ascending idea on strings acts as transition to the first theme, a sardonic one for clarinet which is taken up by strings then woodwind in another brief climax. The second theme is a balletic one for flute over pizzicato strings, elaborated in bewitching orchestration. The development initially alights on the ascending idea, heard as an accompanied 'cadenza' for violin, then strings take up the clarinet theme and a violent climax ensues. The flute theme is reprised, again with evocative orchestration, before the clarinet theme provokes another violent climax. The latter fades out, leaving a paraphrase of the introduction to conclude matters.

The second movement is a scherzo of wide contrast. Competing cellos and basses set in motion an angular theme that moves between woodwind and strings, then piano, before a percussive outburst makes way for the trio, a liturgical-sounding chant intoned by flutes then clarinets. The initial idea on lower strings quietly appears (at a slower tempo) then oboes, flutes and clarinets continue pensively with the chant. The angular theme emerges at the same pace, suddenly accelerating in a return to the scherzo music. This time the chant is shouted out by brass over skirling strings, only to be cut off at its apex. Three stark piano chords, and the initial idea returns on lower strings (and at a slower tempo) to see the movement through to its plaintive close on upper woodwind and strings, rounded off by a final percussive gesture.

The third movement opens with an eloquent melody heard initially on oboe, continued by cello then strings as an expansive climax is reached. A six-note 'motto' becomes prominent, paving the way for a central section centred on a sombre theme for lower strings, with a regretful oboe aside. A funereal climax pits anguished strings against baleful brass, then a further inward transition sees the return of the main theme on violin, now with its second half taken up by full strings with the motto again in attendance. A rapt coda initially recalls the oboe's regretful aside on trumpets, now extended downwards so that it runs into an elegiac recall of the main theme's initial phrase on cellos then woodwind, the motto distant on upper strings as the music dies away.

Without pause, a side-drum crescendo leads into the finale. Woodwind then lower strings unfold a brooding introduction before the movement lurches into greater activity with a scurrying theme on clarinet then piano as a powerful climax ensues. Strings declaim a passionate theme that is soon recast as a warmly expressive melody in the violin's lower register, complemented by a soulful theme on horns against airborne trumpets and glittering piano. Plangent strings recall the introduction, then the scurrying theme returns on the way to a massive climax. This is brutally cut short, timpani thrice sounding the six-note motto, then the expressive melody returns resignedly on cello. It builds gradually to an expansive restatement of the introduction, the music all the while gaining pace and ardour, before launching into the decisive final bars.

Symphony No. 2 'To October,' Op. 14 (1927)
(CD 2: 8.572708)

Vasily Petrenko: *For me the* Second *and* Third Symphonies *are experimental and abstract in the way that visual art of the 1920s was. Think of artists like Malevich, that particular brand of abstract constructivism – and cubism, too. Here we enter a crazy laboratory of the grotesque in music. The young composer is trying to use the 12-tone system in that slithering beginning. It's not so obvious at first because we tend to interpret Shostakovich's themes as melodies or ciphers, like DSCH, but they are often actually serial. The* Second Symphony*, while not a great work, is for me a genuine, brave response to a commission. He's showing that he's learned to write for a larger orchestra and for chorus.*

The two years between the *First* and *Second Symphonies* saw Shostakovich enter the most overtly Modernist phase of his career, evident in the *Two Pieces for String Octet* with its intensely emotional *Prelude* written just prior to the *First Symphony* [8.572396] and its bracingly astringent *Scherzo* written soon after. With the *First Piano Sonata*, he produced a combative one-movement piece decidedly in the lineage of Soviet Futurist composers, while the ten piano pieces comprising *Aphorisms* [both 8.555781]

Vasily Petrenko was interviewed by Helen Wallace for a feature in BBC Music Magazine. *His words are reprinted with kind permission of the magazine.*

Symphony No. 1, Op. 10 (1924-25)
(CD 1: 8.572396)

Vasily Petrenko: *The* First Symphony *is a formidably original student work, but you can trace the links. The orchestration owes a debt to Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky is an inspiration in the first half, and Tchaikovsky can be felt in the slow movement. And, for all its maturity, I've come to see how the score was drilled and squared by his teachers, particularly Glazunov. You can sense how the work was being shaped: I don't think it just came pouring out fully formed. The clue is that Glazunov knew it really well. Ironically, it was Glazunov who ruined Rachmaninov's* First Symphony *by not learning it, conducting it drunk and messing it up. But he conducted Shostakovich's* First Symphony *well, and then sent it off with his official recommendation to 27 countries. That was how Shostakovich's music first became disseminated in the West.*

The *First Symphony* was preceded by a sizeable amount of music. The composer destroyed almost all his juvenilia in 1927, but a few piano pieces have re-emerged, notably a *Funeral March in Memory of the Victims of the Revolution* (1917) and a fragmentary *Sonata* (1919). The surviving five of *Eight Preludes* for piano (1920) find him grappling with Debussy and Scriabin, while the *Scherzo* for orchestra (1921) adopts a more overly late-Romantic tone. Glazunov is evident in the *Theme and Variations* for orchestra and also pervades the *Three Fantastic Dances* for piano (both 1922) [Naxos 8.555781], whose idiomatic writing is a reminder Shostakovich was a pianist of some distinction. None of these adolescent works, however, whether the Rimskyian *Two Fables of Krïlov*, the Rachmaninov-like *Suite* for two pianos (both 1922), the Brahmsian *First Piano Trio* (1923) [Naxos 8.553297] or the Prokofiev-like *Scherzo* for orchestra (1924), prepares one for the individuality and maturity of what followed.

Shostakovich began his *First Symphony* in October 1924 (initial ideas may date from a year earlier) as a composition exercise while at the Leningrad Conservatoire, completing the first two movements by December. The third movement was finished by mid-January, but the finale proved troublesome. A concert in Moscow featuring several of his works received only a lukewarm reception, but it brought him into contact with the music theorist Boleslav Yavorsky and Civil War hero Mikhaíl Tukhashevsky, who became prominent supporters. Returning to Leningrad, he completed the fourth movement at the end of April. A two-piano transcription was given on 6th May and well received, while the orchestration was finished during the period June 30th-July 1st. Despite the doubts of his teacher Maximilian Steinberg, Shostakovich strove to secure a hearing, gaining the support of the musicologist Boris Asafyev and, most crucially, the conductor Nikolay Malko, who agreed to take on the first performance.

The première took place in Leningrad with the Philharmonic Orchestra on 12th May 1926, a resounding success whose date Shostakovich was to mark for the rest of his life. Bruno Walter gave the West European première in Berlin on 6th February 1928 and Leopold Stokowski the United States première in Philadephia on 2nd November, with Hamilton Harty giving the British première in Manchester three years later. Stokowski made the first recording, with the Philadelphia Orchestra, in November 1933, followed by Artur Rodzinski with the Cleveland Orchestra in April 1941 and Arturo Toscanini with the NBC Symphony in March 1944. 1951 saw the earliest Soviet recordings, by Constantin Silvestri with the All-Union Radio Symphony, and Kirill Kondrashin with the Bolshoy Theatre Orchestra.

The *First Symphony* is scored for woodwind in pairs (but three flutes – with one doubling piccolo), four horns, two trumpets, three trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion (three players), piano and strings. Although its four movements outline the standard classical trajectory (with the scherzo placed second), the opening movement is a highly innovative take on sonata-form, while the expressive divide between the first two movements and the slow movement is such that the finale has to open-out its emotional range still further to ensure a convincing resolution.

The first movement is the most original in conception. It begins with a laconic idea on solo trumpet, commented on

"Petrenko's Shostakovich cycle goes from strength to strength… if there has been a finer account of the *Tenth* in recent years, I confess I must have missed it."

Gramophone on *Symphony No. 10* (*Gramophone* Award Winner)

"Vasily Petrenko and the RLPO here notch up another commanding success with a dynamic recording of Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 11*… The RLPO is on top form here. This is a gripping, visceral performance."

The Telegraph on *Symphony No. 11*

"The bass, Alexander Vinogradov, is outstanding, and soprano Gal James also impresses with her mix of artlessness and allure."

Financial Times on *Symphony No. 14*

"Since Vasily Petrenko and the Liverpudlians haven't disappointed in any instalment of their Shostakovich cycle so far, the chances were they would excel here. And they do... The many wild climaxes are exceptionally vivid."

BBC Music Magazine on *Symphony No. 4*

"A shattering account of Shostakovich's urgent, anguished *Eighth Symphony* proved that conductor Vasily Petrenko is building a cycle for the ages."

Time Out, New York on *Symphony No. 8*

SHOSTAKOVICH

The Symphonies

Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

Vasily Petrenko