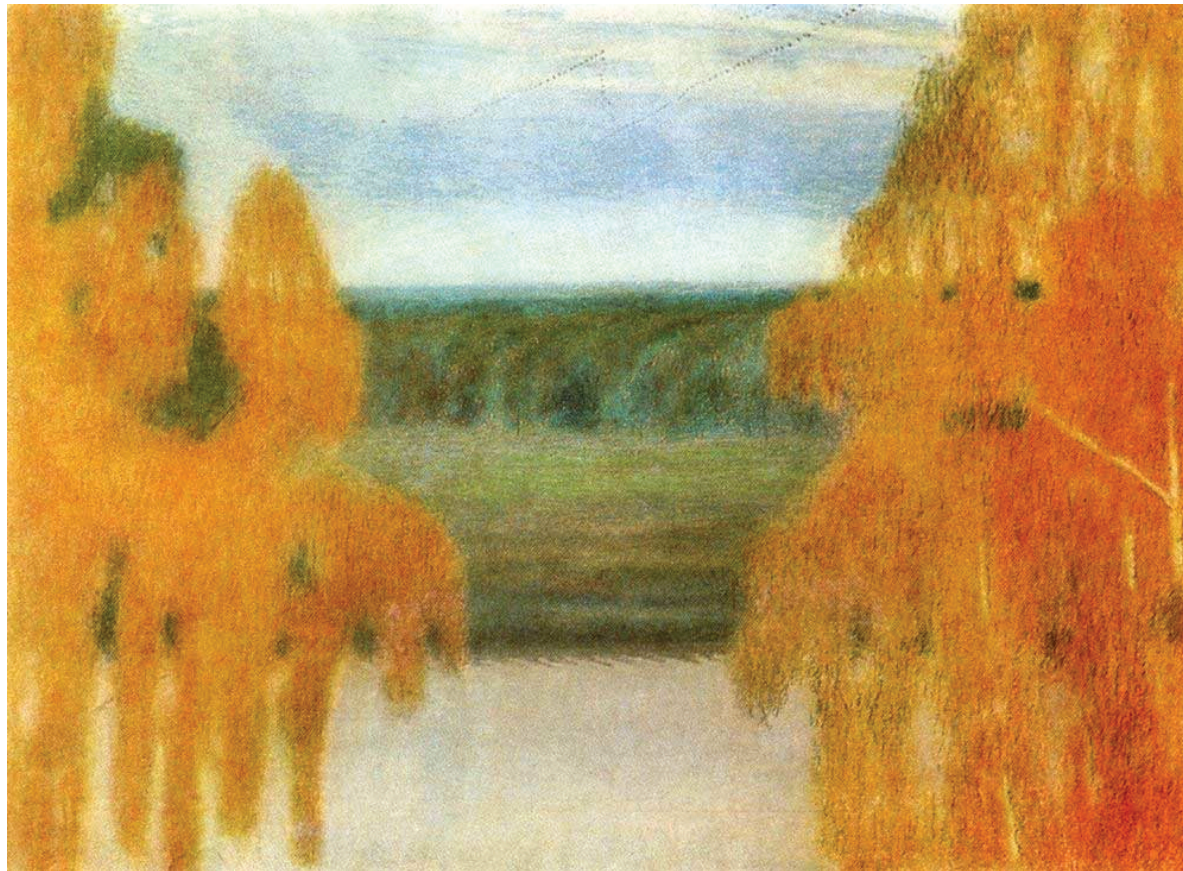




Boris
TCHAIKOVSKY
Piano Trio

Cello Sonata • Solo Cello Suite

Christopher Marwood, Cello
Haik Kazazyan, Violin • Olga Solovieva, Piano



Boris Tchaikovsky (1925–1996)

Piano Trio • Cello Sonata • Solo Cello Suite

Boris Tchaikovsky stands out as one of the most original composers of instrumental music in the post-Shostakovich generation. In his lifetime, he composed numerous highly praised works that include two numbered symphonies, a *Sebastopol Symphony* and *Symphony with Harp*, a *Chamber Symphony*, four solo concertos and six string quartets, among other chamber works and vocal music. He graduated from the Moscow Conservatory in 1949 where he studied composition under three great Russian masters – Vissarion Shebalin, Dmitry Shostakovich, and Nikolay Myaskovsky.

During his student years and through the 1950s, Tchaikovsky earned a visible reputation with a handful of impressive chamber works – including the ones featured here – that embraced the deep-rooted traditions of his teachers, while at the same time displaying a lyricism of remarkable freshness and individuality. In the 1960s, during the more liberal climate then prevalent in the Soviet Union, Tchaikovsky took a number of bold initiatives in expanding his musical language. In the major works of this period, he challenges both the procedures of classical form as well as the lyrical character of his earlier works. This new creative direction can be heard in his string quartets starting with the *Second* (1961), the *Piano Quintet* (1962) [Naxos 8.573207], and especially in three path-breaking solo instrumental concertos, each one of which presents an innovative compositional feature that is made evident to the listener. These latter works comprise the *Cello Concerto* (1964) in which thematic identity is tactically subverted and replaced with a bravura of textural and gestural reference points; the one-movement *Violin Concerto* (1969), based on the principle of non-repetition of thematic material; and the *Piano Concerto* (1971) [Naxos 8.557727], the surfaces of whose five movements, embracing five different classical forms, are fractured into a mosaic of short, rhythmically rigid phrases. Each of these intrepid musical experiments reflects an ever-searching imagination, couched in a powerful and highly original musical language that can be

playful at one moment and deeply moving in the next. Tchaikovsky's quest for formal innovation continues in the works written after 1970, consolidating this decade of expansion.

In the works dating before 1960, three of which are on this recording, one already finds a number of features that anticipate the transformations that were to follow. One of these is the use of motivic material with strong rhythms, a prominent, defining feature of all Tchaikovsky's major works. As a result, rhythmic and metric details play a vital part in each of his compositions. Another is the composer's tendency to introduce an aggregate of terse motifs in the faster movements. This allows Tchaikovsky considerable pliability in their manipulation and transformation. We find these features very much present in the outer movements of the *Piano Trio* and the *Cello Sonata*. We are also rewarded by Tchaikovsky's gift for writing long flowing melodic lines in their slow movements.

One of the works on the programme, the *Piano Trio* of 1953, earned much praise for the young composer. Firmly rooted in tonality, the work shows the influence, if only superficially, of Shostakovich's *Piano Quintet* of 1940. It shares with that work an opening movement marked *Toccata*, whose textures and attitude pay homage to the Baroque, and a concluding pair of movements that, like the Shostakovich, are of similar stately elegance. The inspiration, however, is all Tchaikovsky's.

The opening *Toccata* propels its sonata sections with vigorous speed and engaging counterpoint. From the very first measure, a breathlessly paced succession of no less than half a dozen short motifs is introduced without anticipation or apology, in a tempo marked *Presto*. This leads directly to a syncopated theme, introduced by the piano, whose jazz-like shifts between 3/4 and 4/4 meter contrast with the accentuated downbeats in 4/4 time that dominate the first thematic group. The ideas then engage in a high-spirited conversation as they reconcile their differences in an exhilarating development section. A recapitulation follows.

In the following movement, *Aria*, a yearning melody emerges in three-part counterpoint, its individual phrases delicately exchanged and interwoven among the three instruments in a gracefully flowing dialogue. Following a more relaxed central section with a lilting piano accompaniment, the themes from the first section return and lead to a crescendo, by way of a rapturous duet between violin and cello.

In the final *Variations*, the theme lumbers out in embryonic form at the outset as a series of detached two- and three-note fragments on the piano. These phrases are taken up by the violin, then the cello, and sewn together into a flowing, serenade-like theme. The variations that follow are each built from these short constituent phrases whose rhythmic fingerprints are everywhere present. They are combined, recombined, and assembled into a lyrical embroidery of ever-changing texture and mood. In the central section, starting where the strings play pizzicato, the music takes a temporary excursion from three to two beats per measure and gradually builds to a crescendo, culminating in a stirring passage with triple and quadruple stops on the strings. The final few variations return to triple meter and bring the movement and the work to its elegiac D major conclusion.

The three-movement *Cello Sonata* (1957; dedicated to the composer Mieczysław Weinberg) is cast in a similarly structured three-movement format. The first movement, *Allegro non troppo*, in sonata form, unfolds over an impassioned ever-present stream of semiquavers. A propulsive first theme that obsesses over a four-note tattoo in 2/4 time is followed by a broad arching second theme in 3/4 time that soars over a restless piano accompaniment. After a repeated exposition, a progression of heavy piano chords introduces the development section where the two themes confront each other with relentless shifts back and forth between duple and triple meter. The encounter culminates in a brief riveting polyrhythmic passage: here, the cello, in double stops, utters a declamatory version of the second theme in compound meter (5/8) over the piano's adaptation of the first theme in 2/4 meter. A short recapitulation follows. The second movement, *Largo*, is

an aria that takes lyrical flight from two tender phrases: a descending figure introduced by the piano in the opening bars, and a phrase in dotted rhythm that follows on the cello. As the music progresses, the two ideas are exchanged back and forth between the instruments in elegantly dovetailed counterpoint, its airborne quality abetted by the gentle interplay between two and three beats per measure. On display is Tchaikovsky's ability to summon the most beautiful lyricism from the simplest starting point. Toward the end, a dancelike passage, awakened by the piano's hemiola-inflected semiquavers, invites a momentary reverie before the movement draws to its melancholic conclusion.

The final *rondo*, marked *Andante*, is built on three main ideas that are introduced at the outset. The cello, in the opening bars, presents the first theme in harmonics, then a livelier dancelike theme in pizzicato, followed by a bowed theme with a limping gait. The themes freely interact and alternate with one another with playful agility. At times their constituent intervals and rhythmic patterns will pair off and give rise to new ideas or variations that take on a life of their own. At one point, for example, the cello, in pizzicato, introduces a six-note rhythmic tattoo (a dactyl affixed to an anapest) that becomes a prominent feature of the movement, with which the movement also ends.

Tchaikovsky composed his *Solo Cello Suite* in 1946 at the request of Mstislav Rostropovich, a fellow student at the Moscow Conservatory. On hearing the work's rich lyrical detail, the legendary cellist commented, 'I already knew he was a greatly talented composer'. The composer revised the *Suite* in 1960 and dedicated it to Rostropovich. Its five movements provide a showcase for the suppleness of Tchaikovsky's lyricism, as well as an example of the composer organising a composition in the form of a multi-part suite, an approach he would use in a number of subsequent works, including the *Partita for Cello and Chamber Ensemble* (1966), the *Theme and Eight Variations for orchestra* (1973); and his vocal masterpiece, *Signs of the Zodiac* (1974) [Naxos 8.557727]. The opening *Prelude* is based on a theme made up of undulating scale patterns, punctuated by the occasional flourish, which flirt around the key of D minor and which recall Johann Sebastian Bach.

The following *March* in E minor falls into ABCBA form and features a robust theme in dotted rhythm that is contrasted by an obsessive figure in parallel ninths. The reprise of the initial theme is stated in a whispering pizzicato suggesting the style of many Russian folk song settings. The *Aria* in C minor is a hauntingly reflective reverie that once again reveals the lofty heights on which Tchaikovsky can set his lyrical sails. The *Capriccio* in D major gets a lot of cheerful mileage from a few simple rhythmic ideas. The final movement consists of a brief, somber *Intermezzo* followed

by the *Coda*, which summarily recasts the undulating theme of the *Prelude*, now transformed from its original key of D minor to the brighter key of D major.

The first performers of the works were: *Piano Trio* – Victor Pikaizen (violin), Eugeny Altman (cello) and Boris Tchaikovsky (23 October 1956); *Cello Sonata* – Mstislav Rostropovich and Boris Tchaikovsky (2 March 1958); *Solo Cello Suite* – Mstislav Rostropovich (2 February 1961).

Louis Blois



The Boris Tchaikovsky Society, a public non-profit organisation, was founded in Moscow in late 2002 and registered in 2003. Among the founders and members of the Society are composers, including pupils of Boris Tchaikovsky, musicologists and music enthusiasts. The composer's widow, Yanina-Irena Iossifovna Moshinskaya (1920–2013), was also a founder of the Society. The honorary members of the Society include Victor Pikaizen, Vladimir Fedoseyev, Andrei Golovin, and Valery Kikta. The late Rudolf Barshai, Galina Vishnevskaya, Mstislav Rostropovich, Valentin Berlinsky, Karen Khachaturian, Timur Mynbaev, Edward Serov, and Andrei Eshpai, were also supporters of the Society. The Society is open to foreign members and boasts a number from Brazil, France, The Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, Ireland, the United States and Great Britain. Among the Society's goals are the study of Tchaikovsky's legacy, the dissemination of his music and the support of events connected with his music. The Society has assisted in recordings and issues of many CDs on different labels, including world première recordings; assisted in the preparation of numerous orchestral and chamber performances in European countries, as well as in the USA, Brazil, and Japan. The Society welcomes everyone who admires the music of this great Russian composer. It will be delighted to answer any inquiries and to send scores.

Website: www.boris-tchaikovsky.com

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Haik Kazazyan



Photo: Ira Weinrauch

The violinist Haik Kazazyan is the winner and a prizewinner of numerous international music competitions, including the Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow (2002, 2015), the Wieniawski Competition (2001) and the Long-Thibaud Competition (2005). Kazazyan has performed with orchestras including the Mariinsky Orchestra, the Orchestre national de France, the Royal Scottish National Orchestra, the Russian National Orchestra and the Moscow Philharmonic, under the batons of Valery Gergiev, Andrew Litton, Teodor Currentzis, Alexander Lazarev, Constantine Orbelian and Yuri Simonov, to name a few. His chamber music partners include Eliso Virsaladze, Natalia Gutman, Alexei Lubimov, Alexander Rudin, Denis Matsuev and Freddy Kempf. He has performed in many great halls around the world, including Carnegie Hall (Stern Auditorium) in New York, the Barbican Hall and the Wigmore Hall in London, the Berlin Philharmonic Hall, the Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory, the Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow, Victoria Hall in Geneva, Usher Hall in Edinburgh, and the Royal Concert Hall in Glasgow. Kazazyan has recorded two albums for Delos, *Opera Fantasies* (2010) and the Grieg *Violin Sonatas* (2017, with Philipp Kopachevsky). Kazazyan was born in Yerevan (Armenia), graduated from the Moscow Conservatory in 2006 and studied at the Royal College of Music in London from 2006 to 2008. He is a soloist of the Moscow Philharmonic Society, and teaches violin at Moscow Conservatory.

Christopher Marwood



Photo: Miki Barlok

The cellist Christopher Marwood is a founder member of the Vanbrugh Quartet (1985), with whom he won the London String Quartet Competition in 1988. From 1986 to 2013 the Vanbrugh Quartet was Resident Quartet at RTÉ. The Vanbrugh Quartet has collaborated with many of the world's great artists and has enjoyed invitations to leading festivals and concert venues. The quartet's 30 albums include nominations for *Gramophone* Awards and Editor's Choice. For Marco Polo the Vanbrugh Quartet has recorded works by Frederick May and Aloys Fleischmann [8.223888], and for Naxos – the works of Boris Tchaikovsky [8.573207]. Marwood also performs regularly as a soloist and in other chamber music groups. He founded the West Cork Chamber Music Festival with Francis Humphrys in 1996 and remains director of the string quartet masterclass programme. Marwood graduated from Cambridge University, London's Royal Academy of Music and the Conservatorium Maastricht and currently teaches cello and chamber music at CIT Cork School of Music and at the Royal Irish Academy of Music.

Olga Solovieva



Photo: Igor Prokhorov

The pianist Olga Solovieva is a prizewinner of the Russian Open Taneyev Chamber Music Competition (1999) and a finalist at the XX Chamber Music Competition in Trapani, Italy (2000). At the XII International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow she was awarded the Best Accompanist Prize, and is also a Boris Tchaikovsky Society Award Winner (2010). She has performed in Russia and abroad, and collaborated with such renowned musicians and groups as the Vanbrugh Quartet, the Vilnius Quartet, Roel Dieltiens, Alexander Rudin, Fanny Clamagirand, Julian Bliss, Dmitry Khrychov and Sergey Kostylev, among others. Her discography includes the complete Liadov piano music for Northern Flowers, and recordings for Grand Piano [GP716], Toccata Classics and Albany Records. For Naxos she has recorded music by Sergey Taneyev [8.557804], and Boris Tchaikovsky [8.557727 and 8.573207]. Solovieva was born in Moscow, graduated from the Russian Academy of Music (Moscow), and took a post-graduate course as an assistant to Professor Leonid Blok. Since 2004 she has been a professor at the Gnessin Musical College, and has given masterclasses in Ireland and Belgium.

www.olga-solovieva.ru



From left to right: Christopher Marwood, Olga Solovieva, Haik Kazazyan, Ilya Dontsov.

Photo: Igor Prokhorov

Boris Tchaikovsky stands out as one of the most original composers of the post-Shostakovich generation. The three works presented here helped establish his early reputation for expressive lyricism and strong rhythms that embrace the deep-rooted traditions of his teachers Miaskovsky, Shebalin and Shostakovich. The elegant and emotionally searching *Piano Trio* is considered by some to be a kind of self-portrait. The *Cello Sonata* and *Solo Cello Suite* were both written for Mstislav Rostropovich who declared, 'I consider him to be a genius, whose contribution to the cello repertoire has yet to be sufficiently appreciated.'



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	Piano Trio in B minor (1953)	25:10
1	I. Toccata: Presto	5:19
2	II. Aria: Adagio – Andante	10:03
3	III. Variations: Moderato non troppo	9:44
	Cello Sonata in E minor (1957)	22:19
4	I. Allegro non troppo	7:26
5	II. Largo	7:22
6	III. Andante	7:28
	Solo Cello Suite in D minor (1946, rev. 1960)	13:30
7	I. Prelude: Moderato	2:18
8	II. March: Allegretto	1:45
9	III. Aria: Adagio	4:17
10	IV. Capriccio: Allegro	1:32
11	V. Intermezzo e coda: Largo – Moderato	3:28

Christopher Marwood, Cello

Haik Kazazyan, Violin 1–3 • Olga Solovieva, Piano 1–6

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