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SHOSTAKOVICH | GUBAIDULINA

Violin Concerto No. 1, Op. 77 | In tempus praesens

Simone Lamsma

Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra

James Gaffigan | Reinbert de Leeuw



SUPER AUDIO CD

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DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)

Violin Concerto No. 1, Op. 77 *

- | | |
|--|-------|
| [1] Nocturne: Moderato | 11:49 |
| [2] Scherzo: Allegro | 6:25 |
| [3] Passacaglia: Andante | 15:16 |
| [4] Burlesque: Allegro con brio – Presto | 5:01 |

SOFIA GUBAIDULINA (B. 1931) **

- | | |
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| [5] “In tempus praesens” Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (2007) Live Recording | 38:33 |
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* James Gaffigan, conductor

** Reinbert de Leeuw, conductor

total time 73:21

Dmitri Shostakovich – Violin Concerto No. 1, Op. 77

The Central Committee reorganised the entire musical life in the Soviet Union in 1932, setting up a union for composers and adding to it the ‘Orgkomitet’ – the committee for control of quality and ideology – in 1939. The Composers’ Union expressed the purpose of the Soviet composer in the following terms: *“The Soviet composer must concentrate his attention predominantly on the victorious, progressive objectives of reality, on all that is heroic, clear and fine. This distinguishes the spiritual world of the Soviet citizen and must be embodied in musical imagery that is full of beauty and power.”*

In the eyes of the union and the Central Committee, Shostakovich was one of those obstinate composers who were not remotely concerned about this. He was therefore denounced in 1936 – the rod with which he was beaten being his opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* – following which he drastically simplified his technique in his Fifth Symphony (which actually significantly augmented the power of his protest). Shostakovich also immersed himself zealously in film music and confined himself to just a few works for general consumption, which he wrote in accordance with the directives. Three further symphonies followed during the Second World War. In turn, these are either intensely sorrowful, embittered and sombre or imbued with forced jollity, which is just as acrid in its own way. The same applies to the chamber music from this period, including the wonderful Piano Quintet and the impressive Piano Trio.

There was a second great cultural purge in 1948, when once again Shostakovich was classed among the villains. After all, he had failed to write any heroic

anthem to celebrate Stalin's victory and heroism in 1945, instead producing an ironic, bitter and intangible Ninth Symphony. Between that symphony and the Tenth, completed in 1953 after Stalin's death, Shostakovich wrote only a single major orchestral work – the First Violin Concerto (apart of course from the official 'parade' pieces and some poignant private works, such as the Fourth and Fifth String Quartets and the song cycle *From Jewish Folk Poetry*).

This substantial composition dated largely from 1947 and 1948, but following his official reprimand, Shostakovich decided to shelve the concerto temporarily. After all, the music here was yet again anything but happy, not designed to promote diligent labour, not an anthem for the people but rather another tragic, even bitterly acidic lament. How many tens of thousands of people had Stalin transported, murdered, physically and psychologically broken? Shostakovich had also incorporated several Jewish melodies into the violin concerto, which would never have gained official approval. Finally, after the Tenth Symphony, he decided to revise the Concerto, which had initially been given the opus number 77, making minor adjustments here and there.

For instance, Shostakovich had first used a brief motif based on his own initials – DSCH (signifying D, Eb, C, B in German notation) – in the Tenth Symphony. The same motif appears a number of times in the Scherzo of the concerto, alternating with a fiery Slavic Jewish dance theme. Also, at the start of the Scherzo, Shostakovich quotes from the third movement of the Tenth Symphony. The similarities with the Tenth are also striking in the finale. It is as if Shostakovich was using this symphony and the works that followed it to expunge the terror of Stalin from his system.

The structure of the First Violin Concerto is particularly original, with a sequence of four movements – slow, fast, slow, fast – entitled Nocturne, Scherzo, Passacaglia and Burlesque. The opening movement (Nocturne) is a beautiful song, blossoming from a single melodic fragment. The many repetitions of small melodic and rhythmic cells and the use of an orchestral accompaniment that is confined predominantly to the lower registers fashions an unusually broad aural landscape. It is at one and the same time heart-warming and chilling, ice-white music.

The Scherzo is biting and dazzlingly virtuosic, like a carousel gone wild. Sometimes it seems to be purely for effect, but repeated listening peels away those layers of 'impact'. The underlying scheme is too intelligent for that, the harmonic structure too ingenious and more than anything else too dramatic.

The ensuing Passacaglia is, quite simply, the pinnacle of this concerto; a masterpiece – mature, elegiac and highly lyrical. The passacaglia theme is repeated nine times with contrapuntal elaborations. This is followed by a large-scale cadenza that forms a bridge to the finale. The concerto closes with a Burlesque, in which the theme from the Passacaglia has one final, piercing reappearance. The melodies are quasi-Russian, Slavic and here and there Jewish, occasionally alarming and demonic in their wildness. 'Carefree' and 'happy' are foreign terms in Shostakovich's musical vocabulary.

Leo Samama

Translation: Bruce Gordon/Muse Translations

Sofia Gubaidulina - In tempus praesens

For a long time, the Russian Tatar composer Sofia Gubaidulina (born in Chistopol in the Soviet Union in 1931) was scarcely known at all in the West – her music could only be heard on cassette tapes that had been smuggled out of Russia. Her religiously inspired sound world was regarded by the Soviets as an insult, so that she was compelled to write film music to survive. In the meantime, brave musicians would perform her intractable works, written from an inner sense of compulsion, in damp cellars and draughty attics.

When she was studying at the Moscow Conservatoire, the institution's director, Dmitri Kabalevsky, lectured her for her "mournful and profound" music, which signally failed to extol the unbridled joy of Soviet youth. Dmitri Shostakovich, who awarded Gubaidulina the highest distinction for her final examination in 1959, took a different view, saying that he hoped she would continue to follow her 'mistaken path'. His words gave her the encouragement to carry on.

She made her breakthrough in the West in 1981 with her first violin concerto *Offertorium*, which she dedicated to the Latvian violinist Gidon Kremer, a great champion of her music. It is no great coincidence that this piece was inspired by Johann Sebastian Bach who, like Gubaidulina, wrote music from a perspective of deeply felt religiosity. She based her concerto on the theme from Bach's *Musical Offering*, which is 'offered up', note for note, in the course of the work, after which she reconstructs it in reverse order.

Kremer gave the work's first performance to great success in Vienna, a trigger for Gubaidulina's reputation spreading throughout Europe. During the Holland Festival of 1989, which was dedicated to unknown Russians, she emerged as an audience favourite and conductor Reinbert de Leeuw became one of her most ardent proponents.

Shortly after the premier of *Offertorium*, the Swiss patron of the arts Paul Sacher asked her to compose a further violin concerto for the German soloist Anne-Sophie Mutter, but nothing came of this due to lack of time. It was only in 2007, eight years after Sacher's death, that Gubaidulina completed *In tempus praesens*, which was given its premier by Mutter at the Lucerne Festival. This second violin concerto was a further bombshell and, just like *Offertorium*, the work then embarked on a triumphal procession around international concert venues.

For this work, Gubaidulina drew her inspiration from her link with the soloist's name – both after all were called variants of 'Sofia'. When I interviewed her, this is what she told me about it: 'When I finally had the space to write this violin concerto, after Sacher's death in 1999, I had the image of Sofia in my mind for a whole year. She was the Greek goddess of wisdom and was involved in the creation of the world and of art. She embodies the preoccupation of artists with both the light and dark sides of our existence; that is what my piece is about.'

In tempus praesens is scored for a large orchestra with quadruple woodwind – from piccolo to contrabassoon – three Wagner tubas and a huge array of

percussion. Remarkably, there are no first or second violins, so that the soloist only has to relate to the lower strings. The result is a work of extreme contrasts in which very deep, infernal passages are juxtaposed with extremely high, celestial episodes. Much more so than *Offertorium, In tempus praesens* is a spectacular work for the violinist, who plays virtually from start to finish and barely has a chance to pause for breath. The virtuosity demanded by the work is never an end in itself, and while Gubaidulina compels the soloist to explore the extremes of her instrument, she never uses what are termed 'extended techniques'.

This time too, an 'offering' is being made and Gubaidulina considers that she worked this out even better than in her first concerto for the violin. 'Around two-thirds of the way through, the orchestra starts to produce increasingly aggressive outbursts of sound, from which the violinist attempts in vain to escape. Suddenly, the work falls silent: the soloist is being crucified. This moment is followed by a cadenza, which for me symbolises the process of creation.'

The moment described by the composer is a dramatic pinnacle in what is undoubtedly an incisive work. One involuntarily holds one's breath during the violinist's spectacular pyrotechnics, as she battles against the razor-sharp, effectively bloody interruptions by the orchestra. The sudden silence comes as a shock, after which the soloist slowly brings out the sunshine with a hesitant, fragile motif. Here, indeed, a new world is being formed.

Gubaidulina sets this passage in the famous 'Golden Ratio', which we often also find in Bach's music. This is based on the Fibonacci sequence, which she has incorporated into all of her compositions since the 1980s. She says, about this: 'In the Soviet Union, I lacked the freedom that I discovered in the West. But too much freedom is not good for the creative process. Schoenberg had already discovered this in the early 20th century, when he started to consider all twelve tones as equals. His twelve tone music is, however, a system of constraint, which I find to be excessively limiting. Fibonacci sequences are much more flexible and I also use them as a resource rather than as an end in themselves. I try to use their possibilities to maximum effect in every new composition. But I have still to write the perfect piece.'

Thea Derks

Translation: Bruce Gordon/Muse Translations



Simone Lamsma

Hailed for her “brilliant... polished, expressive and intense” (Cleveland Plain Dealer) and “absolutely stunning” (Chicago Tribune) playing, Dutch violinist Simone Lamsma is respected by critics, peers and audiences as one of classical music’s most striking and captivating musical personalities. Conductor Jaap van Zweden with whom Simone enjoys a regular collaboration, describes her as one of the leading violinists in the world.

With an extensive repertoire of over 60 Violin Concertos, Simone Lamsma performs with leading orchestras around the world including Europe’s Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Royal Stockholm Philharmonic, Netherlands Radio Philharmonic, Rotterdam Philharmonic, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Orchestre National de France, London Philharmonic, BBC Philharmonic, BBC Symphony, Academy of St Martin in the Fields, Frankfurt Radio Symphony, Luzern Symphony, Brussels Philharmonic, Royal Flemish Philharmonic, Orchestra Sinfonica Nazionale della RAI and RTVE Orchestra; Asia’s Hong Kong Philharmonic, Seoul Philharmonic and Yomiuri Nippon Symphony orchestras; New Zealand Symphony Orchestra; the São Paulo Symphony Orchestra in South America; and the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago Symphony, San Francisco Symphony, Dallas Symphony, National Symphony Orchestra of Washington, Cincinnati Symphony, St Louis Symphony, Oregon Symphony, Vancouver Symphony, Quebec Symphony and NAC Orchestra in Ottawa in North America. Besides her close collaboration with Jaap van Zweden, Simone Lamsma has worked with many other eminent

conductors including Vladimir Jurowski, Sir Neville Marriner, Yannick Nézet-Séguin, Jukka-Pekka Saraste, James Gaffigan, Sir Andrew Davis, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Jiří Bělohlávek, Marek Janowski, Carlos Kalmar, Kirill Karabits, Stéphane Denève, Hannu Lintu, Yan Pascal Tortelier, Markus Stenz, Juanjo Mena, Reinbert de Leeuw, Fabien Gabel and James Feddeck.

A dedicated chamber musician, Simone Lamsma combines her solo appearances with recitals and chamber music performances in prestigious concert venues worldwide.

In 2015 Simone Lamsma's recording of sonatas by Mendelssohn, Janáček and Schumann with pianist Robert Kulek was released on the Challenge Records label, receiving high accolades from the press. Simone Lamsma is the recipient of numerous national and international honours including the 2010 Dutch VSCD Classical Music Prize as a New Generation Musician, has performed in the presence of HRH Queen Beatrix of The Netherlands as part of the nationally broadcast 2011 Queen's Day Concert with the Dutch Radio Chamber Philharmonic, and was made an Associate of the Royal Academy of Music in 2011 in recognition of her significant and distinguished contributions to her field.

Simone Lamsma began studying the violin at the age of 5 and moved to the UK aged 11 to study at the Yehudi Menuhin School with Professor Hu Kun. At the age of 14 she made her professional solo debut with the North Netherlands Orchestra performing Paganini's 1st Violin Concerto, her debut

highly praised by the press. She continued her studies at the Royal Academy of Music in London with Professor Hu Kun and Professor Maurice Hasson, where she graduated aged 19 with first class honours and several prestigious awards. Simone Lamsma currently lives in The Netherlands.

On this disc Simone Lamsma performs Gubaidulina's '*In tempus Praesens*' on the 'ex Chanot-Chardon' Stradivarius (1718), and the Shostakovich Violin Concerto no.1 on the 'Mlynarski' Stradivarius (1718).

She currently performs on the 'Mlynarski' Stradivarius (1718), on generous loan to her by an anonymous benefactor.

The Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra

The Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra (RFO), founded in 1945, is an essential link in the Dutch music life. The RFO performs symphonic concerts and operas in concert, as well as many world- and Netherlands premieres. Most concerts take place in the context of concert series NTR ZaterdagMatinee (the Royal Concertgebouw in Amsterdam), the AVROTROS Vrijdagconcert series (TivoliVredenburg in Utrecht), broadcasted live on NPO Radio 4 and regularly televised.

Markus Stenz was appointed chiefconductor in 2012, after predecessors as Bernard Haitink, Jean Fournet, Willem van Otterloo, Hans Vonk, Edo de Waart and Jaap van Zweden. The RFO has worked with internationally highly regarded conductors such as Leopold Stokowski, Kirill Kondrashin, Antal Doráti, Charles Dutoit, Michael Tilson Thomas, Gennady Rozhdestvensky, Mariss Jansons, Peter Eötvös, Vladimir Jurowski and Valery Gergiev. The American conductor James Gaffigan is principal guest conductor since the season 2011-2012. Bernard Haitink has connected his name to the RFO as patron.

The RFO has build an extensive CD catalogue, with works by contemporary composers such as Jonathan Harvey, Klas Torstensson, James MacMillan and Jan van Vlijmen, the registration of Wagner's Parsifal, Lohengrin, die Meistersinger von Nürnberg. Complete symphonies of Bruckner, Rachmaninov, Shostakovich and Hartmann have been released in recent years. The release of Simplicius Simplicissimus (K.A. Hartmann) has especially received the highest

international critical acclaim. The RFO has been awarded the Edison Classical Oeuvre Award 2014 for its longstanding essential contribution to Dutch musical life.

www.radiofilharmonischorkest.nl



James Gaffigan

Hailed for the natural ease of his conducting and the compelling insight of his musicianship, James Gaffigan continues to attract international attention and is one of the most outstanding American conductors working today. James Gaffigan is currently the Chief Conductor of the Lucerne Symphony Orchestra. Since taking up this position he has made a very significant impact on the Orchestra 's profile both nationally and internationally with a number of highly successful tours and recordings. In recognition of this success James's contract has been further extended until 2022. He also holds positions as Principal Guest Conductor of the Netherlands Radio Philharmonic Orchestra and he was appointed the first Principal Guest Conductor of the Gürzenich Orchestra, Cologne in September 2013, a position that was created for him.

In addition to these titled positions, James Gaffigan is in high demand working with leading Orchestras and opera houses throughout Europe, the United States and Asia. The 2015/16 season included debuts with the New York Philharmonic and Bayerische Staatsoper, in a production of Don Giovanni and other return engagements included the Munich and Los Angeles Philharmonics, Dallas Symphony, Orchestre de Paris, Orchestre National de France, and the Vienna Staatsoper where he conducted Le Nozze di Figaro.

In the 16/17 season, James Gaffigan will continue to appear across the globe with such orchestras as the Cleveland Orchestra, Chicago, San Francisco, Toronto, Detroit, BBC, Bournemouth and Sydney Symphonies; the Oslo, Seoul

and Los Angeles Philharmonics; in Paris he visits the Orchestre de Paris and Orchestre National de France, and he will debut with the Salzburg Mozarteum Orchestra. Upcoming opera engagements include leading productions at the Chicgo Lyric Opera and Washington National Opera.

Other opera appearances have included Vienna Staatsoper where he has conducted La Bohème, Don Giovanni, and Le Nozze di Figaro, Glyndebourne Festival with productions of Così fan Tutte, La Cenerentola and Falstaff, Norwegian Opera with La Traviata, Hamburg Opera with Salome and with Zurich Opera conducting La Bohème.

In recent seasons, James Gaffigan has also enjoyed guest engagements with the London, Dresden, Czech and Rotterdam Philharmonics, Vienna Symphoniker, Dresden Staatskapelle, Deutsches Symphony Orchestra (Berlin), Konzerthaus Berlin, Zurich Tonhalle, Gothenburg, Tokyo Metropolitan and City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestras, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, Leipzig, Berlin and Stuttgart Radio Orchestras. In the US, he has additionally worked with the Philadelphia Orchestra, St. Louis, Baltimore, Pittsburgh and National Symphony Orchestras.

Mr. Gaffigan was a conducting fellow at the Tanglewood Music Center and was part of American Academy of Conducting at the Aspen Music Festival. In 2009, he completed a threeyear tenure as Associate Conductor of the San Francisco Symphony in a position specially created for him by Michael Tilson Thomas. Prior to that appointment, he was the Assistant Conductor of the Cleveland

Orchestra where he worked under Music Director Franz WelserMöst from 2003 through 2006. James Gaffigan was also named a first prize winner at the 2004 Sir Georg Solti International Conducting Competition.

Reinbert de Leeuw

In the field of Modern and Contemporary music, Reinbert de Leeuw is widely known and a highly respected musician. Born in Amsterdam, Reinbert de Leeuw's musical activities cover a wide field: Conductor, composer and pianist. Since 1974 he has been conductor and music director of the Schönberg Ensemble. He is also author of a book on Charles Ives and a book with musical essays and has collaborated on 8 film documentary series of twentieth-century composers such as Messiaen, Ligeti, Gubaidulina, Vivier, Górecki shown on Dutch television and which have won international acclaim.

Reinbert de Leeuw regularly conducts Holland's foremost orchestras and ensembles, including the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, New Sinfonietta Amsterdam, Residentie Orchestra The Hague and ensembles such as the Netherlands Chamber Choir, the ASKO and the Netherlands Wind ensembles and the orchestras of the Dutch Radio. He has toured and performed in festivals world wide. He was guest artistic director of the Aldeburgh Festival (1992) and was artistic director of the Tanglewood Festival of Contemporary Music (1994-1998). In the 1995-96 season he was the centre point of the 'Carte Blanche' series in the Concertgebouw Amsterdam.

He is a regular guest in most European countries (France, Germany (Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra), England, Belgium) and the United States (Tanglewood Festival, New World Symphony, Lincoln Center Chamber Music Group New York, Aspen and the St. Paul's Chamber Orchestra in Minneapolis,

and lectures at the Juilliard School of Music in New York), Japan and Australia where he has served as artistic advisor for the contemporary music series of the Sydney Symphony Orchestra from 2000 up to 2004. During that period he has conducted several concerts in Sydney and the Brisbane Festival. Reinbert de Leeuw has been involved in various opera productions at the Netherlands Opera in Amsterdam such as Strawinsky (a.o. The Rake's progress), Andriessen (Rosa, a Horse drama. Writing to Vermeer) Ligeti (Le Grand Macabre), Vivier (Rêves d'un Marco Polo) and Rob Zuiddam's opera 'Rage d'Amours'. More recently the world premiere of Louis Andriessen's new Opera « La Commedia » (June 2008) and Rob Zuidam's new opera « Adam in Exile » (June 2009) as well as Andriessen's Theatre of the World, which premiered in Los Angeles and then in Amsterdam at the Netherlands Opera (2016). His recordings as a pianist have won many prizes, including the Dutch Edison as well as the Edison Oeuvre Prize in 2013, the Premio della critica discografica Italiana, the Grand Prix of the Hungarian Liszt Society and the Diapason D'Or. Some 30 recordings as a conductor have been brought out by Philips, teldec, DGG, Electra Nonesuch, Ovidis Montaigne and cover a wide range of repertoire by Messiaen, Strawinsky, Janacek, Liszt, Gubaidulina, Oestvolskaya, Schönberg, Webern, Vivier, Andriessen and Reich. In July 2006, the Schönberg Ensemble brought out a CD/DVD box documenting 30 years of their concerts and recordings on 25 CD's and DVD's, most of which are conducted by Reinbert de Leeuw. (Schönberg Ensemble Edition "A century of music in perspective").

Reinbert de Leeuw has received the Sikkens Award (1991) and the prestigious '3M' prize (1992) and in 1994 was made Honorary Doctor at the University of Utrecht and is Professor at the University of Leiden and in 2016 the Honorary Doctorate of the University of Leuven (Belgium).

Reinbert de Leeuw has been co-founder and from 2001-2010 artistic director of the Summer Academy, the international orchestra and ensemble academy of the National Youth Orchestra. For his performance of Messiaen's "Des Canyons aux Etoiles" with the Summer Academy Orchestra in 2006, he received the 'Angel' for the best performance during the Edinburgh Festival. In September 2008 he was knighted in the Order of the Dutch Lion.

This High Definition Surround Recording was Produced, Engineered and Edited by Bert van der Wolf of NorthStar Recording Services, using the 'High Quality Musical Surround Mastering' principle. The basis of this recording principle is a realistic and holographic 3 dimensional representation of the musical instruments, voices and recording venue, according to traditional concert practice. For most older music this means a frontal representation of the musical performance, but such that width and depth of the ensemble and acoustic characteristics of the hall do resemble 'real life' as much as possible. Some older compositions, and many contemporary works do specifically ask for placement of musical instruments and voices over the full 360 degrees sound scape, and in these cases the recording is as realistic as possible, within the limits of the 5.1 Surround Sound standard. This requires a very innovative use of all 6 loudspeakers and the use of completely matched, full frequency range loudspeakers for all 5 discrete channels. A complementary sub-woofer, for the ultra low frequencies under 40Hz, is highly recommended to maximally benefit from the sound quality of this recording.

This recording was produced with the use of Sonodore microphones, Avalon Acoustic monitoring, Siltech Mono-Crystal cabling and dCS - & Merging Technologies converters.



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NTR
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