



**MARIINSKY**  
FOUNDATION OF AMERICA

# Coverage Highlights

October 22 – October 26, 2012



## Valery Gergiev

October 18, 2012



<http://www.charlierose.com/view/interview/12615>

## **Gergiev directs World Orchestra performance in NY**

October 20, 2012



The first performance of the World Orchestra for Peace under the direction of Russian conductor Valery Gergiev took place at New York's Carnegie Hall on Friday to thunderous applause from the audience.

The Orchestra performed compositions by Mozart, Verdi, Mahler, Strauss and Bartok.

Founded by Sir Georg Solti in 1995, the World Orchestra for Peace consists of leading musicians who represent more than 40 orchestras from 24 countries.

## With Hill Auditorium, 'Rite of Spring' both turning 100, Mariinsky Orchestra coming to celebrate

Susan Isaacs Nisbett

October 22, 2012



All was quiet - or almost so - on the Ann Arbor front.

The big news that May of 1913 was the opening of the fabulous new concert hall, Hill Auditorium, which over the century to come would host so many remarkable concerts by so many remarkable soloists, orchestras and ensembles. Wagner, Beethoven, Brahms, Bruch and Verdi were on the hall's opening bills, played by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

Across the Atlantic, in Paris, the city's performing arts scene was about to receive a jolt, though: the premiere of Stravinsky's "The Rite of Spring," choreography by Vaslav Nijinsky, decor and costumes by Nicholas Roerich, was a mere two weeks away. Ditto the fracas its premiere would trigger on opening night, May 29, 1913, at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées.

### PREVIEW

Things started off politely enough that evening, with a performance of "Les Sylphides," to music of Chopin. "Rite" changed the tune. Both choreography and music were radical, and partisans of the traditional and of the modern, present for this premiere by Diaghilev's Ballets Russes were quick to voice opinions—and not always politely.

That is to say, a sort of riot ensued, with police called to restore of modicum of order.

Thus was launched Stravinsky's "Rite," which on its own, as a concert piece, would become a landmark of 20th century orchestral literature, a work that that Leonard Bernstein would call that century's most important piece of music.

“Rite,” like Hill Auditorium, turns 100 this year. The University Musical Society, celebrating Hill’s centenary, brings both hall and music together Saturday evening, when “Rite” is a major player on a program by Russia’s Mariinsky Orchestra of St. Petersburg, directed by Valery Gergiev.

The program also includes Richard Strauss’s “Ein Heldenleben” and the Shostakovich Concerto in c minor for Piano, Trumpet and String Orchestra, with pianist Denis Matsuev—a sensation on his two previous visits here—as soloist.

Hill, having been renovated in 2002, is a spry and spiffy 100-year-old. How about “Rite”?

To talk about this work at its century mark—to find out what made it so unusual, to explore its ramifications -- we turned to some local experts. We asked a few questions of a musicologist, a pianist participating in a two-piano reading of the score and a conductor. Here’s what they had to say about “Rite.”

**Mark Clague, associate professor of musicology, University of Michigan.**

“A close friend,” is what U-M musicologist Mark Clague calls “The Rite.”

“I wore the grooves smooth on my first Philadelphia Orchestra LP of ‘The Rite’ when I was a teen-ager,” he wrote in an e-mail, “and thus know every twist and turn in the music from the opening wind solos to the 11 bass drum blasts and final orchestral collapse.”

**Q. So how vital is this music still, both for people like you who know it well, and for folks coming to it as novice listeners?**

A. Even at the ripe old age of 100, Stravinsky's “Rite” still pulses with excitement. It demands the best of technical and expressive playing from each and every musician and flawless rhythm from the conductor.

I had the wild experience two years ago of hearing “The Rite” expertly performed by a regional orchestra that had never done it before. Many of the audience members present had never heard “The Rite” before and were blown away by its angularity and raw emotional power. ....

Talking to people hearing the music for the first time renewed my understanding of Stravinsky's revolutionary accomplishment.

**Q. Which was what?**

A. Stravinsky's three ballet scores for Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes — “The Firebird” (1910), “Petrushka” (1911), and “The Rite” (1913) — are among the most influential compositions of the 20th century. They featured dozens of innovations in rhythm, harmony and orchestration that made the young composer an international sensation and influenced composers from Edgard Varese and Olivier Messiaen to Aaron Copland and Philip Glass. Stravinsky and Schoenberg came to define the two opposing poles of musical aesthetics for their age.

“The Rite” was revolutionary in all its dimensions from Stravinsky's score to Vaslav Nijinsky's choreography and the costumes by Nikolai Roerich. Every facet of “The Rite” is used to tell the story of tribal sacrifice; it's not about beauty. The costumes hide the dancers' bodies, the motions are the opposite of graceful, the music is savage. Watching a few of the episodes on Youtube from the Joffrey Ballet's reconstruction of the original Rite is the best way to understand this.

**Q. What would we riot about in the classical concert hall today, in 2012?**

A. Historians have debated just how riotous the premiere of “The Rite” really was. It may have been more of a publicity stunt or journalistic exaggeration. Today's equivalent might be a flash mob in the middle of an art gallery.

**Q. What are you looking forward to about the Gergiev “Rite”?**

A. Valery Gergiev and the Mariinsky Orchestra are undoubtedly one of the world's greatest performance combinations to realize Stravinsky's “Rite.” Not only are the performers culturally connected to the Russian folk tunes and tales that inhabit “The Rite,” but they perform with utter emotional abandon. For a piece that lives and dies on raw energy and the soloistic commitment of every player, it's impossible to think of a better band of performers than the Mariinsky to bring out the work's savage intensity and dramatic virtuosity. It's a kind of concerto for orchestra and Gergiev's baton is the bow of the soloist bringing the vibrations to life. Gergiev conducts without restraint, privileging emotional impact over ensemble clarity; if anyone could cause a riot with “The Rite,” it would be Gergiev.

**Q. Any recorded performances you would particularly recommend?**

A. I like recordings that bring out something surprising in the music. To prepare for the Gergiev's Hill performance, one could listen to Riccardo Chailly conducting Cleveland or Michael Tilson Thomas with the San Francisco Symphony. It's hard to go wrong, although I'd probably rank Stravinsky conducting it himself as being more of historical interest than musical. END TRIM

**Arie Lipsky, Music Director, Ann Arbor Symphony Orchestra**

For a performer's perspective on “Rite,” we turned to the esteemed conductor of the A2SO, who also happens to be a cellist and flutist.

**Q. What's the place of “Rite” in the 20th century canon?**

A. Encouraged by the success of ballets “Firebird” and “Petrushka,” Diaghilev encouraged young Stravinsky to compose anything he dreamed up; the results turned to be absolutely revolutionary. The post-romantic Stravinsky who until 1913 expanded mostly on his Rimsky-Korsakov Russian roots created with “Le Sacre” (“Rite”) what musicians characterize as the beginning of 20th century music. From the hushed and unusually high bassoon opening to the savagery of the concluding “Danse Sacrale,” the score is fascinating, the orchestration is brilliant and the rhythmic verve has a superb sense of drama

which still keeps audiences on their toes. The scandalous public uproar of the debut also probably helped turning "Le Sacre" score to a favorite concert piece even without dancers.

**Q. What's difficult about conducting and playing "Rite"?**

A. Performing the "Rite of Spring" is always a challenge; technically and musically, the score requires a virtuoso performance from every player.

The rhythmic meter complexity of the ending where the sacrificial virgin dances herself to death is known to be one of the most treacherous scenes in all of music.

**Christain Matijas Mecca, pianist, associate professor of dance, U-M School of Music, Theatre and Dance**

Matijas Mecca's acquaintance with "Rite" is double-fold, encompassing the choreography and the music both. Make that triple-fold: he not only knows the score, he's playing it. On Oct. 21, he and pianist Ilya Blinov of Susquehanna University offered Ann Arborites the chance to hear "Rite" in the two-pianist version - a revelatory way to encounter the work. He's also speaking about "Stravinsky's Lost Ballet: 'Le Sacre du Printemps'" at 12:30 p.m., Wednesday, Oct. 24.

"Sacre," he said in an e-mail, "would come to represent the 20th-century for both serious and casual music audiences, but also for those who know little to nothing about music or dance. It has served as a stamp of identity for the past century"

**Q. Is "Rite" still spry as a centenarian?**

A. Yep, and I gather it will remain as spry and fun well into the next century and beyond. **Q. What made it so revolutionary? Was it the score as much as the dancing? How do you tell the music from the dance?**

A. Revolutionary? Good press? The pre-concert showing of the night prior to our famous evening went off without a hitch. No riot, no complaints. But opening night, for the creme de la creme or the see-to-be-seen crowd, they showed, and it was their response that provided great copy. It's been posited that Beatlemania was more an invention of the Fleet Street press than it was a conflagration of unbridled teen spirit, but not unlike "Sacre," timing and history have helped to secure this creative/cultural stamp of youth culture.

Tell the music from the dance? That's part of my talk on the 24th. There is no separation here, as there is no separation when a great score is involved with dance. We may be able to turn "Sleeping Beauty," "Romeo and Juliet," "Firebird," "The Three-Cornered Hat," "Appalachian Spring," "Le Sacre du Printemps," or any number of works, into pure concert-music works, but they cannot, and will not, be detached from their spiritual partner: in these instances, the movement.

The movement vocabulary for "Sacre" was extreme, and opening night audiences who expected the impeccably trained Russian corps were clearly offended by what they perceived as anti-dance. Especially

since Nijinsky's previous ballet, premiered just two weeks earlier, "Jeux," which was, in Debussy's words, "a Dalcrozian exercise of the worst kind," resulted in far fewer objections. However one might feel about Dalcroze-initiated movement, audiences would have seen that and considered that as a form of dance. But "Sacre," with all its stillness, angles, obscured bodies, etc., would not be acceptable to an audience that wanted to be both fed and entertained.

Back to revolutionary -- the Satie/Picasso/Cocteau masterpiece "Parade" was far more revolutionary a work. (A glimpse of "Parade" follows:)

**Q. What would our riot be about in the concert hall in 2012?**

A. If a riot were to occur in concert halls today, it would be in response to the fact that many orchestras do not present themselves as an instrument (no pun or such intended) that delivers a broad representation of music for the concert hall, but instead have spent the better part of the past six-plus decades reinforcing their role as a museum of past artistic glories. The range of discussions that concern themselves with issues of classical and contemporary repertoire are so painfully out of touch with the communities they serve. A positive example we witnessed here in Ann Arbor was Mason Bates' appearances with both the San Francisco Symphony and the Chicago Symphony. His voice is now, his aesthetic is now, and presenting his work alongside those of recognized 19th and 20th century masterpieces is an appropriate and healthy path towards riot-free concert halls.

Audiences should be rioting at concerts where they hear the same works they can experience in any number of interpretations on CD, DVD, Streaming Media, or downloads. The Ballets Russes under Diaghilev commissioned, premiered, and presented so many masterpieces of the past century, but also presented works set to scores by Chopin, Schumann, Cimarosa, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rossini, and others.

Will I go to hear Gergiev conduct "Sacre"? Of course.

It's, the birthday year for the piece, the orchestra and conductor are amazing, (a splendid time is guaranteed for all) and we should continue to perform and present these works, but we've excluded a wealth of new works by living composers in the past half-century. Audiences will never have the opportunity to help determine what new works will be contributors to our legacy of great artworks. We've marginalized "new" music to such an extent that countless works will never have the opportunity to take off, and based on their own merits, either sink or swim.

**Q. What's it like to play this in the two-piano version? What's hard? What's fun?**

A. Too much fun, really. As with so many great compositions, technique won't save you, however much one may need to properly execute the piece. But mental and emotional preparation is crucial if one hopes to convey the exquisite enormity of the work. It hangs, in many section, by a thread, so critical and mental commitment is the common thread that carries me, as a performer, from stem to stern.



**Q. What do you hear in the two-piano version that doesn't perhaps sing out in the orchestral version (and vice-versa)?**

A. I always enjoy hearing other people's reaction to this scoring. The piano 4-hand edition was published at the time of its premiere, as the orchestral version didn't appear in print until the early 1920s, so it this version that was a first introduction for many people. The angularity of the work speaks louder in the piano version, if only because the piano is a percussion instrument. Both versions are a must to experience and one doesn't supersede the other, as they are, in a way, two very different pieces. The impact for me is the same, but the pathway that leads to that impact is quite different.

<http://www.annarbor.com/entertainment/preview-mariinsky-orchestra/>

## For Georg Solti, a centenary salute on a global scale

John von Rhein

October 22, 2012



Georg Solti loved birthday parties, especially his own. One can only imagine how thrilled he would have been to witness the outpouring of affection from the international gathering of colleagues who presented a special concert in his honor at Symphony Center on Sunday, the exact day of his 100th birthday.

Chicago was the second and final U.S. stop (after New York's Carnegie Hall) of the present incarnation of the World Orchestra for Peace, an ensemble made up of leading musicians from 60 world orchestras, including past and present members of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra, which Solti directed for 22 years – "the happiest years of my life," he once said.

Sir Georg founded the World Orchestra in 1995 as a symbolic means of ending the hatred and prejudice that imperiled his early career as a Hungarian Jewish musician fleeing the Nazi onslaught. He directed its first concert, in Geneva, Switzerland, that same year. Plans for a second Solti-led performance in 1998 had to be altered because of his sudden death, at 84, in September 1997. Valery Gergiev, who knew

Solti well and endorsed his intentions, replaced him on the podium and has led the orchestra's periodic performances ever since.

Sunday's two-hour centennial concert, conducted by Gergiev and hosted by Sir Georg's widow, Lady Valerie Solti, was broadcast live on radio stations across the nation (including WFMT 98.7 FM) and worldwide, and was simultaneously recorded for later transmission on TV and DVD.

It could not have been easy assembling all that talent on one stage. Soprano Angela Gheorghiu and bass Rene Pape, both of whom had received major career boosts from Solti, took part in person, as did four alumni of the Georg Solti Accademia, a singers' training institute in Tuscany, Italy, where the maestro spent his summers, and the Solti Foundation U.S., which supports young conductors.

Other important artists who had often performed with Solti -- including singers Renee Fleming, Kiri Te Kanawa and Placido Domingo, violinist Anne-Sophie Mutter and pianists Andras Schiff and Murray Perahia -- shared memories of Solti via prerecorded video tributes. Smiling beatifically, Gheorghiu said she looked forward to eventually joining Sir Georg in heaven so they could "make our big concert together" there.

All of the music chosen for the program carried special significance in Solti's storied career, beginning with the overture to "The Marriage of Figaro."

The Mozart opera marked the then 25-year-old Gyorgy Solti's first and only performance at the Hungarian National Opera in Budapest, on March 11, 1938. He was the first unconverted Jew to conduct in that theater since World War I. Just hours after the debut, Hitler's armies invaded neighboring Austria. Hungary fell not long afterward. Solti's parents packed him off for safekeeping to neutral Switzerland where he sat out World War II, his young life in peril.

His fortunes changed for the better following the war. Solti (now Georg) was installed as music director of the Bavarian State Opera in Munich, home to composer Richard Strauss, who befriended the up-and-coming conductor. Solti would champion Strauss' operas and orchestral works for the rest of his career.

Gergiev's reading of Strauss' tone poem "Don Juan" surely would have won an approving smile from Solti, given its razor-sharp rhythms and fullness of sonority, which were hallmarks of his own Strauss conducting.

Pape nobly intoned Sarastro's aria "In diesen heil'gen Hallen" (from Mozart's "The Magic Flute"), followed by a deeply affecting "Addio del passato" (from Verdi's "La Traviata") as sung by Gheorghiu. They returned in tandem to sing -- as well as act out -- an amusingly over-the-top rendition of the Don Giovanni-Zerlina duet from Mozart's "Don Giovanni."

The artistic and financial encouragement Solti gave young musicians who were just starting out on their careers is part of his great legacy. Four singers -- one each from Armenia, Sweden, Mexico and Great Britain -- did a nice job with the quartet from Verdi's "Rigoletto," led by the Romanian-born Cristian Macelaru, recipient of this year's Solti Foundation U.S. conductor's award.

The orchestra's well-meshed strings came to the fore in a generously molded account of the Adagietto from Mahler's Symphony No. 5, a longtime signature for Solti, particularly during his Chicago years.

Gergiev ended with the Concerto for Orchestra by Bela Bartok, Solti's "lifelong hero" (as Lady Solti called him). Save for Fritz Reiner, nobody conducted this brilliant showpiece with quite the Hungarian snap of Solti. But Gergiev came close, and the orchestra's articulate woodwinds (including former CSO clarinet principal Larry Combs) and formidable brasses rose mightily to the occasion.

After several more CSO musicians, past and present, joined the ensemble, the orchestra bade farewell with a high-stepping encore, Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever" – the same march Sir Georg had conducted here in 1986 following the [Chicago Bears'](#) Super Bowl victory. Sunday's crowd clapped along merrily. Nobody missed the birthday cake, balloons and party hats.

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/music/ct-ent-1023-gergiev-review-20121023,0,743893.column>

# THE NEW YORKER

October 22, 2012

## GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
28	29	30	24	25	26	27
4	5	6	31	1	2	3

### ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

#### MARIINSKY ORCHESTRA

Valery Gergiev conducts his magnificent ensemble in a program that largely tends to native concerns, featuring music by the contemporary master Rodion Shchedrin and by Shostakovich (the enigmatic Sixth Symphony); Strauss's "Ein Heldenleben" concludes the concert in high style. (Carnegie Hall, 212-247-7800, Oct. 31 at 7:30.)

# The New York Times

## Unexpected Accents in Familiar Brahms

Valery Gergiev Leads London Symphony and World Orchestra

Anthony Tommasini

October 23, 2012



Since its founding in 1904, the London Symphony Orchestra has been self-governing. Perhaps having the authority to choose their own conductors empowers the players to be, in the best sense, responsive and adaptable.

On Monday night at Avery Fisher Hall, the London Symphony opened Lincoln Center's Great Performers season with a Brahms program, the first of two, under Valery Gergiev, the orchestra's principal conductor since 2007. In the "Tragic Overture," the Violin Concerto (with the probing Canadian violinist James Ehnes) and the Second Symphony, Mr. Gergiev revealed a fascinating approach to Brahms, one that favored broad tempos and dark colorings, thick textures and organic shaping of the score. And the London players were with him all the way.

But it must be said that the artistic planners of the Great Performers series did not coordinate well with the New York Philharmonic. This season the Philharmonic is presenting a complete survey of the symphonies and concertos of (you guessed it) Brahms. It begins in three weeks, when, on the same Avery Fisher Hall stage, Kurt Masur will conduct Brahms's Second Symphony and the Concerto for Violin and Cello.

Before this visit to New York, at the orchestra's home at the Barbican in London, Mr. Gergiev began a series of programs that intriguingly combine the orchestral works of Brahms and Karol Szymanowski. If only he were doing the same here. Yet the preparation for the London concerts showed in the authority with which Mr. Gergiev and his players presented these strong interpretations.

Mr. Gergiev did not get comparable results on Friday night at Carnegie Hall, when he conducted the World Orchestra for Peace in a program honoring the 100th birthday of Georg Solti, who founded that ensemble in 1995 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. The World Orchestra, comprising volunteers from international ensembles, assembles periodically to give special concerts around the world. On this occasion Mr. Gergiev (who likes to pack as much as possible into every American visit) led over 80 players from more than 60 orchestras in 35 countries.

Shaping such a diverse roster of musicians into an orchestra with a distinctive character and sound is not possible in limited rehearsal time and was probably not the goal. But what came through, especially in a sometimes unfocused but dark-hued and impetuous account of Bartok's Concerto for Orchestra, was the palpable excitement of skilled artists engaged by the challenge of playing with colleagues from so many orchestras and nations.

After taking the World Orchestra to Chicago on Sunday, Mr. Gergiev was at Lincoln Center on Monday for the London Symphony program. And his approach to Brahms came through from the two forceful chords that begin the "Tragic Overture." This was Brahms playing that valued depth and gravity over slashing attack. The performance captured the heaving turbulence of this dark, moody music.

Mr. Ehnes teamed with Mr. Gergiev for a spacious and calmly intense account of the Violin Concerto. Mr. Ehnes has technical brilliance to spare, but there was not a trace of flashiness in his majestic, poetic and transparent playing. In the finale, where Brahms, a north German who had moved to Vienna, suggests a Gypsy tune, the music emerged with a touch of a heavy-footed Russian dance. Was this Mr. Gergiev's doing?

And in the Second Symphony Mr. Gergiev drew out both its bucolic grace and the restless intensity. He reined in the tempo of the finale so that you never quite trusted the seeming high spirits of this bustling music. And everything broke loose in the coda, which was almost maniacal in its exuberance. The way the players applauded Mr. Gergiev during the ovations at the end of Monday night's concert seemed a genuine act of tribute, not typical concert protocol.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/24/arts/music/valery-gergiev-leads-london-symphony-and-world-orchestra.html>

## Catching up with Keenan Kampa, first American to join historic Russian ballet company

Katie Wall

October 24, 2012



WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Two hours before curtain on Friday evening, dancer Keenan Kampa was well aware that her appearance at the Kennedy Center was not just any performance: it was a homecoming.

"I've been coming here since I was a little girl," she said. "And now to be up on this stage, it's so surreal!"

Raised in the nearby suburb of Reston, Virginia, Kampa grew up attending matinees and master classes [here](#). But this time, she's back as the first American member of the legendary Mariinsky Ballet.

Formerly known as the Kirov Ballet, the centuries-old Russian company and its feeder school, the Vagonova Ballet Academy [here](#), have served as the breeding grounds for dance icons Mikhail Baryshnikov, George Balanchine, and Natalia Makarova, among others.

But the demanding nature of Russian dance is nothing new for the 23-year-old. While attending a master class at the Kennedy Center her senior year of high school [here](#), Kampa was spotted by a Vagonova





instructor and offered a spot at the academy. "I was just very, very fortunate to have that invitation come," Kampa softly recalled, her humility almost as striking as her 5'8" frame.

But the move to St. Petersburg was hardly seamless.

An outsider at Vagonova, Kampa remembers her first year as "full of silence." Unable to communicate with her Russian peers and away from her family for the first time, she struggled to adapt to a foreign culture and an unfamiliar style of ballet.

"Everything about that move was uncomfortable- mentally, emotionally, and then physically, too, because the work ethic there is so different from what we as Americans are used to," she said.

By her second year, Kampa had caught up. Overcoming the initial culture shock and language barrier, she went on to win leading roles in school productions like "The Nutcracker," and ultimately became the first American student to graduate with a full Russian degree. Still, she was heartbroken when she didn't hear back after auditioning for a spot with the Mariinsky.

"I had always hoped to join the company there," she said. "But I knew as an American, and as a foreigner there, it was virtually impossible."

Unsure of her future, Kampa signed a two-year contract with the Boston Ballet upon graduation. When an invitation from Russia finally came a year later, she said, "It was a complete shock." Eager to return to St. Petersburg but still under contract with Boston, she delayed her Mariinsky start date to June 2012.

For Kampa, joining the historic ballet is more than a dream come true -- it's a chance to realize her artistic potential.

"There's something so special about the way the Russians dance," she said. "It's passionate, it's soulful, and it's unlike anything I've ever seen."

Kampa's performance in the ensemble of "Cinderella" at the Kennedy Center last weekend marked the completion of Kampa's first North American tour. She is now back in St. Petersburg with rest of the troupe.

A perfectionist, Kampa welcomes the rigor the Mariinsky reputation brings with it. "The challenge now is not to work to just work," she explains. "But to work intelligently, with a purpose. Because in my head is the image of the dancer I want to be."

<http://daily.abcnews.com/news/2012/10/24/14669601-catching-up-with-keenan-kampa-first-american-to-join-historic-russian-ballet-company?lite>



October 25, 2012

The 2012/2013 season of the Mariinsky Theatre marks the 25th anniversary of the leadership of General and Artistic Director Maestro Valery Gergiev, who has built the Mariinsky into one of the largest, most acclaimed and most dynamic performing arts institutions in the world. The Mariinsky will celebrate this anniversary with an impressive schedule of tours, performances, recordings and events, and will usher in a new era of even greater artistic possibilities with the inauguration of the new Mariinsky Theatre (Mariinsky II).

The new opera house, funded by the Russian Government, is among the largest in the world, capable of supporting the most demanding productions. When it opens in May 2013, it will join the legendary Mariinsky Theatre and the Mariinsky Concert Hall to further the transformation of the Mariinsky's complex into one of the world's premier centers for classical music, opera and ballet.

While maintaining a robust performance schedule in its existing complex in 2012/2013, the Mariinsky will simultaneously conduct ambitious international tours. The itinerary will bring the Mariinsky Opera, Ballet and Orchestra to more than 35 cities worldwide, including such prestigious venues as [Carnegie Hall](#) in New York, Suntory Hall in Tokyo, Shanghai Oriental Art Center in China, the Seoul Arts Center in Korea, the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris and the Salzburg Festival in Austria.

Among the performance highlights of the season will be the Mariinsky Ballet's celebration of the 120th anniversary of the premiere of Tchaikovsky's and Petipa's *The Nutcracker* at the Mariinsky Theatre in 1892. Commemorating this occasion, the Mariinsky has collaborated with EuroArts Music to create the film *The Nutcracker in 3D*, bringing its deep historical tradition together with cutting-edge technology. *The Nutcracker in 3D* will be released in Europe in November 2012, Asia in December 2012 and the United States in December 2012, where it will be shown in more than 400 theaters.

The coming months will also witness the release of two major new recordings on the Mariinsky Label. In December 2012 the label will release the emotionally charged recording of Maestro Gergiev conducting the Mariinsky Orchestra in Shostakovich's *Symphony No. 7 "Leningrad,"* the most recent in the Orchestra's cycle of Shostakovich symphonies. February 2013 will see the launch of the Mariinsky Label's most ambitious project to date, the full cycle of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*. The first recording in the series, *Die Walküre*, will feature [Jonas Kaufmann](#), Nina Stemme, Anja Kampe, Mikhail Petrenko and René Pape with the Mariinsky Orchestra, conducted by Maestro Gergiev.

"These past 24 years have seen a wonderful flourishing of the Mariinsky Theatre in both its artistic program and its institutional achievements, as we have brought the Opera, Ballet, Orchestra, Chorus and our extraordinary Company into the 21st century and a more active and outgoing engagement with the world," stated Valery Gergiev. "We are carrying forward our progress in every way in 2012/2013,

including the opening of our magnificent new opera house. Mariinsky II will provide abundant resources for our artists and audiences, and will ensure that the Mariinsky remains one of the most vital performing arts institutions in the world.”

<http://russia.broadwayworld.com/article/The-Marinsky-Theatre-to-Celebrate-25th-Anniversary-in-2012-2013-Season-20121025#ixzz2AQq1NXKo>



## If You Build It, Will They Come?

Susan Brodie

October 25, 2012

Valery Gergiev certainly believes so. In a move to expand audience capacity and enhance the appeal of St. Petersburg, the [Mariinsky Theater](#) is set to open its new opera house just six months from now. The new theater, across the canal from the existing 19th century house, will double the seating capacity for opera and ballet while further increasing capacity with its expanded behind-the-scenes facilities. Not halfway through Naomi Lewin's interview with Maestro Gergiev, everyone in the room was plotting how to swing a trip to the opening Gala next April.

Mariinsky II, by Toronto-based architects A.J. Diamond of Toronto-based Diamond Schmitt Architects, will seat about 1900 in its main auditorium, which is about the same as the original theater. However, extensive backstage areas and various "mini" venues, including a roof-top amphitheater, will greatly increase the performance capacity of the complex, which includes the 19th century Mariinsky theater and the 2007 Mariinsky Concert Hall. The nearby Rimsky-Korsakov St. Petersburg State Conservatory, the Vaganova Academy of Russian Ballet, and the resident Mariinsky Academy of Young Singers complete an imposing cultural and educational campus that Gergiev compares to Lincoln Center of the Performing Arts.

At today's press briefing Gergiev spoke passionately of a major expansion of the number of educational performances, stressing the immediacy of a child's first experience with live music and the importance of exposing all to this cultural treasure. But he also recognized the Kirov theater's position as a major tourist attraction in St. Petersburg, which Gergiev called "the most beautiful Italian city on the planet". Russia's second largest city attracts around two million visitors annually, most of them during the months of "White Nights". The 59-year-old music director aspires to present as many as 5 performances daily, so that more can experience the thrill of a performance by the Kirov, whose shows always sell out. He further envisions expanding both orchestra and chorus to accommodate simultaneous presentations at home and on tour, after the model of the Vienna State Opera and Orchestra.

The construction of Mariinsky II is funded entirely by the Russian government.

The Mariinsky maintains an increasingly robust media presence for the many who can't experience the company live. Recent and upcoming CD recordings on the Mariinsky label include the new debut recording of 2011 Tchaikovsky Piano Competition winner Daniil Trifonov, playing the **Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto No. 1**, Gergiev conducting the Mariinsky Orchestra in Shostakovich's **Symphony No. 7, (Leningrad)**, and in February 2013, **Die Walkure**, with a starry cast including Anya Kampe, Jonas Kaufmann, Rene Pape, and Nina Stemme. On December 3, 2012, some 500 US movie theaters will carry

The Mariinsky Ballet's **The Nutcracker** in 3D, which will be screened throughout Europe and Asia beginning in November.

Beyond his astonishing musicianship, Gergiev never fails to astonish with his boundless energy, persuasiveness, and drive. The extra and indispensable element is the money to support his vision--we in the US can only dream of the government support. When will this country have a government that recognizes the value of such an institution to all levels of society?

<http://www.classicalvoiceamerica.org/blog/member.cfm?blogid=530&bloggerid=38>

## Brahms: *Piano Concerto No. 1*; *Symphony No. 4*

Fred Kirshnit

October 25, 2012

Extraordinary music was the feature of the two all-Brahms evenings by the **London Symphony Orchestra** at Avery Fisher Hall this week. I happened to be in London when the announcement came that **Valery Gergiev** would be named as the new music director and shared the view of several print watchdogs that the tight discipline of the ensemble would soon be gone with the wind. Some years later, what does the current evidence indicate? I stopped in for the second New York concert to hear for myself.

Ever since the Gould vs. Bernstein battle, it is necessary to think somewhat about the interpretation of the *Piano Concerto No. 1*. Much as I loved Glenn I was partial to Lenny as well (a common reaction which made their very public disagreement so thorny for New York music lovers) and never cared for the “Baroque” argument that all three movements should be played at basically the same tempo. Yet this now somewhat anachronistic theory popped up again when Maestro Gergiev and soloist **Denis**

**Matsuev** appeared to agree on one rather jaunty speed for the entire work. Mr. Matsuev is a very large gentleman and is known in his publicity rounds as “the Siberian Bear”. As expected, he played quite stronghandedly (as we are told did Brahms himself).

It is important to state early that Mr. Matsuev delivered a virtually note perfect performance, no small task with a bid-boned Brahms concerto. Within the confines of his chosen speed, he was balanced, centered and extremely confident. However, there appeared to be little feeling in his digits, the Adagio “portrait of Clara” presented in a lapidary but ultimately dispassionate manner. Had this been a student performance, it would have been appropriate to state: “Bravo! Now that we have all of the notes, let’s proceed to extract the music.”

As for the ensemble, it took very little time to hear that something was not quite in sync. Inner voices were often out of tune or a bit late (the odd tempi may have thrown some of the veterans), entrances were sometimes shrill, the horns – poor blighters – had a simply awful night, able to enunciate the solos satisfactorily but wandering aimlessly through their harmonic underpinnings. Gergiev simply followed along, not imposing much of his will nor toiling to right the ship when appropriate.



Was it jet lag? It could have been, but sounded simply like a lack of precision rehearsal. We all came back from the unseasonably beautiful evening and settled in for what would certainly be a superb *Symphony No 4*. What followed was what one of my favorite New York critics calls a “nothingburger” – not good, not bad and certainly not interesting. This performance seemed adrift most of the time, with only the Allegro giocoso in fine fettle. However, attempting to put his stamp on the piece, Gergiev allowed no pause between the third and fourth movements. Perhaps this is a valid approach, but it appeared that he had neglected to tell the troops, most of whom came in at least a half of a beat late. Even the least sophisticated among us must have noticed this clunky moment.

Those of us old enough to remember hearing Otto Klemperer used to love the uncertainty before a concert. But old Otto had deep-seeded manic depression and therefore an excuse (but, oh boy, when he was *on!*). Valery Gergiev does indeed create frisson with his reputation for inconsistency and surprise. These are great qualities in a guest conductor, but in a music director?

<http://www.musicalcriticism.com/concerts/lincoln-iso-1012.shtml>

## Mariinsky Orchestra to perform Stravinsky's 'Le Sacre' for Hill Auditorium's anniversary

Jonathan Odden

October 26, 2012

On a crisp spring night in 1913, a packed and expectant audience watched Hill Auditorium's inaugural performance by the Chicago Symphony. Little did they know, only two weeks later and halfway around the world, a ballet as infamous as it is famous would premier and change the landscape of the 20th century.

That piece was Igor Stravinsky's *Le Sacre Du Printemps* (The Rite of Spring) and now, as The University Musical Society remembers 100 years of Hill Auditorium, Stravinsky's masterpiece will be celebrated in concert on Oct. 27.

"When it became clear we wanted to showcase the Stravinsky piece as part of the anniversary calendar, there was really only one orchestra to turn to — The Mariinsky Orchestra," said Michael Kondziolka, UMS programming director.

The orchestra, known during the Soviet era as the Kirov Orchestra, is the in-house orchestra for the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia. The theater, which is iconic in Russia as well as internationally, is also an opera house and hosts a ballet company. Originally the Imperial Theater of the Tsars, the theater and orchestra have a colorful and expansive history.

"This is the orchestra that Tchaikovsky wrote all his symphonies for and the ballet company to which he wrote all his ballets for as well," Kondziolka said. "There is not an orchestra more important to the Russian classical tradition."

As famous as the orchestra has become, the work of conductor Valery Gergiev stands out as influential and prolific, explained Kondziolka.

"Valery Gergiev is more than a conductor. He is a real cultural leader. Obviously, he's trained as a musician, conductor; he leads the orchestra deftly, but he also leads the cultural conversation in St. Petersburg."

To get a sense of how famous and respected Gergiev is in the classical world, Kondziolka explained that Gergiev is additionally the principle conductor of the London Philharmonic and was asked to be the associate music director of the Metropolitan Opera in New York.

"Here is a man as internationally recognizable for his presence in classical music and the Russian tradition as the orchestra he conducts," Kondziolka said. "And he is the chief advocate for its continuation and valuation into the future."



In addition to the Mariinsky Orchestra, Russian pianist Denis Matsuev will make a return to Hill Auditorium to perform alongside the Orchestra during Dmitri Shostakovich's Piano Concerto No. 1 in C minor, Op. 35.

"Denis Matsuev, who is in every way a protégé of Gergiev, is a gargantuan Russian piano virtuoso," Kondziolka said. "He has a technical facility on the keyboard that is in the tradition of the great Russian pianists, like Rachmaninov, Prokofiev or Horowitz. He can play anything and make it look easy — it's staggering."

When Matsuev premiered for the first time in 1913, it was an instantaneous and total standing ovation by every person in Hill, even though it was in the middle of the concert, explained Kondziolka.

In the concert companion for the show, the Shostakovich is about clashing musical styles. It describes how the opening, after flourish and fanfare, is melodic and lyrical. This is followed by a quick-tempoed second theme, which crashes into a second movement that sways like a "melancholic waltz." From here the piece moves to an unaccompanied piano prelude before quickly descending into a furious Allegro con brio.

Before the complex journey of the concerto, the concert opens with *Ein Heldenleben* (A Hero's Life), an 1898 piece by Richard Strauss. Strauss, who bridged the end of the 19th century into the first 40 years of the 20th century, was famous for composing Opera's and tone poems, explained Kondziolka.

"What the tone poem *Ein Heldenleben* is, is essentially the name given to a large piece of orchestral music that is telling a story though or conveying a concept through music.

It was an exceedingly 'modern' form for composing at the turn of the century," Kondziolka explained.

"This piece by Strauss meant to evoke through music this idea of the heroic figure, one on a journey," Kondziolka said. "And the unbelievable thing about Strauss is that he wrote like no other composer for a large orchestra. All of his tone poems for orchestra show off the orchestra in a way that no one else does; he shows off what a big, romantic size orchestra can do — and it is an impressive opening to the concert."

<http://www.michigandaily.com/arts/10mariinsky-orchestra-preview26?page=0,1>

## Mariinsky label announces recording of Wagner's Ring cycle

Neil McKim

October 26, 2012



### Landmark Wagner recording to be conducted by Valery Gergiev

In February 2013 the St Petersburg-based Mariinsky Orchestra is set to begin recording the first part of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*.

As part of his 25th anniversary season as general and artistic director at the [Mariinsky Theatre](#), Valery Gergiev will be taking up the baton to record *Die Walküre* with the orchestra. He will be joined by a host of world-class opera talent, including tenor Jonas Kaufmann, sopranos Nina Stemme and Anja Kampe, and basses Mikhail Petrenko and René Pape.

This recording will follow the Mariinsky label's release of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 7 'Leningrad' (in December 2012) and it ties in with the opening of the new Mariinsky Theatre building. The futuristic Mariinsky II, designed by Dominique Perrault, will open in May 2013.

The [Mariinsky label](#) was launched in 2009 and its notable releases have included Shostakovich's *The Nose* and Wagner's *Parsifal*.

<http://www.classical-music.com/news/mariinsky-label-announces-recording-wagner%E2%80%99s-ring-itals-cycle>

# BloombergBusinessweek

## Scene in D.C.: Gergiev in Exchange, Twitter on Runway

Stephanie Green

October 26, 2012



The Library of Congress looked like a scene from “Doctor Zhivago” last night.

Professional skaters glided to Tchaikovsky on a specially designed rink surrounded by a wintry forest. Lighting effects included snowflakes floating from the neoclassical dome.

The evening was hosted by the Initiative for Russian Culture at American University and the Mariinsky Foundation.

The IRC is in its second year fostering educational and cultural exchanges between young Americans and Russians.

Most of the guests were college students from East Coast universities that have participated in the program.

“A mighty American culture and a mighty Russian culture are destined to go on,” said Mariinsky Theatre Artistic Director Valery Gergiev.

He joined Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak for a discussion on the role of the arts in international relations after a beef stroganoff supper.

Kislyak made the observation that art and music are those rare things that “don’t require translation.”

After the talk, guests walked into the winter wonderland where snowflake coconut cake and swan-shaped pastries were served with gelato and Russian black tea.

Other guests included Susan Lehrman, the chairman of the IRC’s advisory committee, and Bay Fang, deputy assistant secretary for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs.

<http://www.businessweek.com/news/2012-10-26/scene-in-d-dot-c-dot-gergiev-in-exchange-twitter-on-runway>