



Monday July 11 2022, 15:30

DENIS KOZHUKHIN, piano

Robert SCHUMANN (1810-1856)

Kinderszenen, Op. 15 (1838), 17'

Jörg WIDMANN (b. 1973)

Intermezzi for piano (2010), 20'

I. [Viertel = 66]

II. Zart singend

III. Mit dunkler Glut (agitato sempre)

IV. Wiegenlied

V. Lento un poco andante

Johannes BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Three intermezzi, Op. 117 (1892), 16'

Edward GRIEG (1843-1907)

From Lyriske Stykker (1867), 11'

Bog I, Op. 12

I. Arietta

II. Vals

Bog III, Op. 43

I. Sommerfugl

II. Til Våren

Bog V, Op. 54

I. Trolltog

15:30 Denis Kozhukhin

20:00 Sarah Maria Sun, Jörg Widmann and Schumann Quartett

22:00 Carolin Widmann



About the music

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770-1827):
32 variations in C minor, WoO 80 (1806)

* Change in program: Kozhukhin will play **Robert Schumanns Kinderszenen, Op. 15 (1838)** instead of Beethovens 32 variations.

Jörg Widmann (b. 1973): Intermezzi (2010)

It was the encounter with Brahms' music that inspired German Jörg Widmann to write his *Intermezzi*, five short piano movements in the style of Brahms' famous ditto. The melancholy beauty of Brahms' late romantic works is reproduced and given new life by Widmann.

The five movements form a unified architecture, a mirror, where the 1st and 5th movements are ultra-short two-part ripples, while the 2nd and 4th movements are nostalgic lullabies with inlaid Brahms quotes. Central is the 3rd movement, which is longer than the other four movements combined, far more complex and insistent in its exploration of the sounds and atmospheres of darkness.

Johannes Brahms (1833-1897):
Three intermezzi, opus 117 (1892)

"I have composed the lullabies of my sorrows," Brahms wrote to Clara Schumann as he sent her his *Three Intermezzis* for review. Clara had no critical remarks. "I feel like your music is staring deep into my soul," she wrote in return. And it is true that the three masterpieces contain a spirituality, melancholy contemplation and sublime beauty of soul-shaking dimensions. In the score for the sadly rocking 1st movement, Brahms wrote "Sleep sweetly my child. It pains me to see you cry". The heavenly soothing melody is accompanied by bell-like bright octaves, but gradually the sorrow is hinted at in the smoldering dark register. 2nd movement transcends this darkness and creates with its flowing eternity melody a moonlight twilight feeling. Clara even believed that the end of the movement gave her comfort in the realization of the imminent coming of death. 3rd movement moves imperceptibly up into the light. But at the end, darkness is again prevalent, cementing that heartbreaking beauty is the best means of expressing nostalgia and gratitude for life - despite the fact that it does not last forever.

Edward Grieg (1843-1907):
Selection from Lyric Pieces (1867-1901)

Throughout his life, Grieg composed his programmatic piano movements, *Lyrical Pieces*. 66 bets in total. Music that proves the greatness of the small. Short formats, versatile moods and poetic depths, played with equal joy by music school students and piano virtuosos.

Each movement is a small universe in itself. Grieg's titles reveal the musical intention. These are concrete tonal images of all that we human sense. A butterfly in the air, the first day of spring or a nocturnal affair. Add to this Grieg's love for his Norwegian homeland. Of course, the trolls in the mountains, the girls on the farm and the conifers in the pine forest must also ring.

Mathias Hammer

About the artist

"[Kozhukhin's] dazzling performance... must have lifted Orchestra Hall a few feet off its foundation. It was hard, in fact, to imagine any pianist seizing this formidably difficult concerto in a mightier grip than this Russian firebrand... Even in a day when keyboard virtuosos are thick on the ground, Kozhukhin is special."

This is how Chicago Tribune writes about the Russian pianist, **Denis Kozhukhin** (born 1986), who back in 2010 at the age of 23 won first prize in the Queen Elisabeth Competition. Growing up in a family of musicians Kozhukhin began his piano lessons when he was 5 – his mother was his teacher. With the Russian piano school as his base, Kozhukhin moved on to Madrid, studying at The Reina Sofia School of Music and received his diploma full of the highest praise from the Spanish Queen herself. Having finished his studies, he went to Italy to The Piano Academy of Lake Como.

Today Kozhukhin has played with numerous orchestras and in many different concert halls and is regarded as one of the best in the generation of younger pianists. His technical ability in combination with his intelligence and sophisticated sense of form and phrasing make critics describe his piano playing as captivating, hypnotizing and energetic. .