



Fresh Thinking

Dalia Stasevska, the BBC Symphony Orchestra's new Principal Guest Conductor, makes BBC Proms debut with compelling programme of works by Sibelius, Weinberg and Tchaikovsky

'She's a real find, making her UK debut with an orchestra clearly having a ball,' *The Arts Desk*, 9 April 2018

Finland has perhaps done more than any other nation to supply the world with a steady stream of fine conductors, each distinguished as much by their individuality as by their unshakeable musicianship. Dalia Stasevska is the latest to seize global attention, thanks not least to her appointment as Principal Guest Conductor of the BBC Symphony Orchestra. The 34-year-old is set to seal her new appointment on Tuesday 6 August 2019 when she makes her BBC Proms debut at the Royal Albert Hall, directing the orchestra in a programme of works by Sibelius, Weinberg and Tchaikovsky. She returns to the UK this autumn for a run of concerts with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra before joining the BBC SO again next April for her Barbican Centre debut.

Dalia Stasevska received accolades from the BBC SO's players for their first concert together at Maida Vale Studios last May, and was invited to join the orchestra's conducting team after their second concert there in December. "It has been so exciting to get to know the BBC Symphony Orchestra and now to be given the chance to develop our relationship," she says. "They are open to new ideas and not afraid to rethink familiar pieces. This is what I love about them. There are no barriers, no walls stopping us from following a fresh line of thought in rehearsal. Making music with an orchestra is a communal experience, where it should be possible to experiment. Where that open relationship exists, then you can find flow. This is my ultimate goal as a conductor, to start to merge with the orchestra, to float free with the music. It's like searching for the truth, for the right way to set people free. It doesn't matter what you're playing. But you do need this spiritual, emotional and imaginative freedom to achieve flow."

Stasevska's BBC Proms programme unites two landmarks of late-Romantic music with a sublime 20th-century concerto that deserves to be a repertoire fixture. The concert opens with Sibelius's evergreen Karelia Suite, presented as a high-spirited preface to Mieczysław Weinberg's Cello Concerto with Sol Gabetta as soloist, sure to be among the highlights of the composer's centenary year. The evening's second half, devoted to Tchaikovsky's Symphony No.6 'Pathétique', offers a chance for its conductor to challenge perceptions of a work conventionally seen as the product of personal tragedy and despair. The conductor's interpretation arises from a long journey of discovery over the past decade.

The turning point came two seasons ago when she performed the 'Pathétique' for the first time. "I began revising my view of the piece and also the way it is so often performed; as the work of a man who knew he was soon to die. No! It's the opposite: he was fighting for life; he was running on emotional adrenalin. This amazing heartbeat was there in the music – he was unstoppable! This was the revelation for me."

The conductor's busy 2019-20 schedule includes debuts with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, Hallé, Detroit, Dallas and NAC (Ottawa) orchestras, and returns to the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra, Oslo Opera and Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra. Her Barbican Centre concert with the BBC SO on Friday 17 April includes two works from 2016, Julian Anderson's *Incantesimi*, originally written for the Berliner Philharmoniker, and Helen Grime's Violin Concerto, with Leila Josefowicz as soloist, presented together with Sibelius's Symphony No.1. Sibelius is also on the bill for her season-opening concert with the Oslo Philharmonic (Saturday 7 September), which stands his Second Symphony in company with Dvořák's Cello Concerto. Her Swedish Radio SO concerts (Wednesday 17 & Thursday 18 September) are set to include Britta Byström's *Farewell Variations* (2005), Tchaikovsky's *Variations on a Rocooco Theme* and Rachmaninov's *Symphonic Dances*, while her RLPO programme encompasses Ligeti's folk-inspired *Concert Românesc*, Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto No.1 in B-flat minor and Mendelssohn's Symphony for Strings No.3 in E minor.

Dalia Stasevska was born in Kiev, Ukraine in 1984 and moved with her family to Tampere in Finland during childhood. She began playing violin and developed a lifelong love for opera at an early age. Having jumped two years at secondary school to concentrate on practising her instrument, she enrolled at Helsinki's Sibelius Academy at the age of 17. Soon after she swapped the leader's chair in a student orchestra for a one-year position with the Tapiola Sinfonietta and a place with the Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. Her passion, she recalls, was for the textures and timbres of orchestral music, not the solo violin repertoire. "Ever since childhood, I've been very determined," she recalls. "I've never done things by half-measure. And I've always been a very sociable person too, which made me feel at home in orchestras."

Stasevska's eureka moment occurred when she was playing for a class of aspiring conductors and was directed for the first time by a female student. "There was no way to hold me back after that!" She saved money to take part in masterclasses with Jorma Panula, and caught the legendary conducting teacher's attention long before her savings ran out. "I worked very hard with him and everything came very naturally after that. He knew I was serious from the start, and has been a great support to me." Stasevska also studied with Leif Segerstam, a larger-than-life influence who encouraged her to lose her inhibitions. "He taught me how to free my inner energy," she notes.

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Notes for Editors

Tuesday 6 August 2019

Royal Albert Hall, 7.30pm

BBC PROMS

Dalia Stasevska conductor | **Soi Gabetta** cello | **BBC Symphony Orchestra**

Sibelius *Karelia* Suite

Weinberg Concerto for Cello

Tchaikovsky Symphony No.6 in B minor (Pathétique)

Friday 16 & Saturday 17 August 2019

Adelaide Town Hall, 8pm (Friday) & 6.30pm (Saturday)

Dalia Stasevska conductor | **Louis Lortie** piano | **Adelaide Symphony Orchestra**

John Adams *The Chairman Dances*

Ravel Concerto for Piano in G major

Rachmaninov *Symphonic Dances*

Thursday 5 September 2019

Oslo Konserthus, 7pm

Dalia Stasevska conductor | **Kian Soltani** cello | **Oslo Philharmonic**

Valen *The Churchyard by the Sea*

Dvořák Concerto for Cello in B minor

Sibelius Symphony No.2 in D major

Wednesday 18 & Thursday 19 September 2019

Berwaldhallen, Stockholm, 6pm

Dalia Stasevska conductor | **Amalie Stalheim** cello | **Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra**

Britta Byström *Farewell Variations*

Tchaikovsky *Variations on a Rococo Theme for Cello and Orchestra*

Rachmaninov *Symphonic Dances*

Thursday 10 October 2019

Liverpool Philharmonic Hall

Dalia Stasevska conductor | **Behzod Abduraimov** piano | **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra**

Ligeti *Concert Românesc*

Tchaikovsky Concerto for Piano No.1 in B flat minor

Mendelssohn Symphony for Strings No.3 in E minor

Saturday 26 October 2019

Barbican Hall, 7.30pm

Dalia Stasevska conductor | **BBC Symphony Orchestra**

Britten *Sinfonia da Requiem*

Stravinsky *Symphony of Psalms*

Rachmaninov *Symphonic Dances*

Thursday 2 & Sunday 5 April 2020, Bridgewater Hall, Manchester

Saturday 3 April 2020, Sheffield City Hall

Sunday 4 April 2020, Leeds Town Hall

Dalia Stasevska conductor | **Kian Soltani** cello | **Hallé**

R. Strauss *Der Rosenkavalier* (Suite)

Tchaikovsky *Variations on a Rococo Theme for Cello and Orchestra*

Dvořák *Silent Woods* for cello and orchestra

Dvořák Symphony No.8 in G major, Op.88

Friday 17 April 2020

Barbican Hall, 7.30pm

Dalia Stasevska conductor | **Leila Josefowicz** violin | **BBC Symphony Orchestra**

Julian Anderson *Incantesimi*

Sibelius *The Swan of Tuonela*

Helen Grime Violin Concerto

Sibelius Symphony No.1 in E minor