

PIANO
CONCERTO No.2
IN C MINOR

BY

SERGEI
RACHMANINOV

JENEBA
KANNEH-MASON

PHILARMONIA
ORCHESTRA

RODERICK
COX

SATURDAY 10 SEPTEMBER at 7.30PM

**Concerto No. 2 in C minor
for Piano and Orchestra, Opus 18 (1901)
by Sergei Rachmaninov**

**Jeneba Kanneh-Mason — Piano
Roderick Cox — Conductor
Philharmonia Orchestra**

“I know that this is the beginning of the end. Not the end of my loving you but the end of our being together.

But not quite yet, darling. Please. Not quite yet.”
— Brief Encounter

"To appreciate good music one must be mentally alert and emotionally receptive. You can't be that when you are sitting at home with your foot on a chair."

— Rachmaninov

“My heart upside down a flame.”

— Apollinaire

Rachmaninov's second Concerto was written after a three year break, following a psychological breakdown and extended period of "writer's block" precipitated by the disastrous premiere of his First Symphony in St Petersburg in 1897. The First Symphony's negative public reception has been attributed to the lack of rehearsal time afforded to the orchestra; rumour also stands that the conductor, Alexander Glazunov - already scathing of the piece due to its innovative length and style - was drunk on the conducting podium. Horrified by a lifeless and disorganised first performance, Rachmaninov himself left the premiere early.

During his subsequent years-long depression, exacerbated by alcoholism, Rachmaninov worked as a performance pianist and conductor. From 1897-88 he held a conducting position at the Moscow Private Russian Opera; in 1899, he made his conducting debut in London, presenting his fantasia 'The Rock' (1893). Rachmaninov attributed his return to health - and his regained confidence to begin composing again - to the treatment of neurologist Nikolai Dahl, who he visited daily for positive suggestion and hypno-therapy between January and April 1900. Written between June 1900 and April 1901, Rachmaninov ultimately dedicated the second Concerto to Dahl.

Perhaps one of the greatest piano concertos ever written, the mastery of the piece rests in the deliberateness of its composition. The passing of the main melody between instruments creates a kind of divine dialogue between orchestra and piano soloist, the heavy made light through seamless transitions, at once harmonic and lyrical. The piece begins with a series of chords, sonically reminiscent of church bells. Bells recur throughout Rachmaninov's work, said to be influenced by his childhood visits to Russian Orthodox church services with his grandmother.

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Written as his “comeback” piece, the Concerto was intended to serve as Rachmaninov’s visiting card, making no doubt of his virtuoso status. The Concerto is notoriously difficult to play, partially due to the large handspan required to do so. Rachmaninov could famously cover 12 piano keys with each hand; even piano legend Vladimir Ashkenazy is reported to have said that when playing Rachmaninov he wished his fingers were a little longer! The Concerto demands extreme technical prowess and dexterity, as a result of the difficulty of maintaining the complicated melody alongside and on top of the choralesque chords that accompany it.

Despite being written more than 120 years ago, the Concerto endures, making notable appearances in *The Seven Year Itch* (1955), starring Marilyn Monroe, and David Lean’s *Brief Encounter* (1945). The Concerto has also been reworked in popular music, with Frank Sinatra and Eric Carmen borrowing from the second movement in the ballads *Full Moon and Empty Arms* (1945) and *All By Myself* (1975). The piece will be played by the Scottish Symphony Orchestra later this year, framed by *Zorahayda* (1874), Johan Svendsen’s depiction of a love story between a princess and a knight, and Jean Sibelius’ *Lemminkäinen Suite* (1895), inspired by the folk tales of Finland’s mythic hero. Reinterpreted for films, songs and programmes addressing the struggles of amorous entanglements, the romanticism of the Concerto is confirmed and cemented in popular conception.

This towering epic burns and sparkles with yearning, bittersweet intensity. We are excited to present it here at Bold Tendencies. It is the perfect completion of our LOVE programme for 2022 that opened some sixteen weeks ago with Scriabin’s *Poems of Ecstasy and Fire*. Our heart has been turned upside down, a flame. Thank you for joining us to share the summer together - again, soon!

Jeneba Kanneh-Mason is Recipient of the Victoria Robey Scholarship to the Royal College of Music, Jeneba was a Keyboard Category Finalist in BBC Young Musician 2018, as well as winner of the Iris Dyer Piano Prize at The Royal Academy of Music, Junior Academy, where she studied with Patsy Toh. She has played concerts in England, Wales, Paris and the Caribbean as recital and concerto in 2021. For the 21/22 season, she performed with the CBSO Youth Orchestra, the Sinfonia Viva for the New Year Gala, as well as recorded with the Vienna Radio Symphony Orchestra. Throughout 2022 Jeneba has been touring globally - in Australia, New Zealand, USA, Antigua and Barbuda. Jeneba has appeared on television and radio, including Radio 3, and The BAFTAs, and has recorded for the album *Carnival* with Decca Classics.

Roderick Cox is Winner of the 2018 Sir Georg Solti Conducting Award by the U.S Solti Foundation. The Berlin-based American conductor has been praised as a “trailblazer...a conductor who will be amongst the vanguard” (Minnesota Star Tribune). Following on from recent successes, such as his debut with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, forthcoming highlights include debuts with the Philadelphia Orchestra, alongside a return to the Los Angeles Philharmonic. In the theatre, Roderick has recently made important debuts at the Houston Grand Opera (*Pêcheurs de Perles*) and San Francisco Opera (*Il barbiere di Siviglia*), as well as recording Jeanine Tesori’s *Blue* with the Washington National Opera. With a passion for education and diversity and inclusion in the arts, Roderick started the Roderick Cox Music Initiative (RCMI) in 2019 — a project that provides scholarships for young musicians from historically marginalised communities, allowing them to pay for instruments, music lessons, and summer camps.

The **Philharmonia Orchestra** is a world-class orchestra for the 21st century. The Philharmonia is a team of 80 musicians of 16 different nationalities led by Principal Conductor Santtu-Matias Rouvali. With award-winning concert series, a vital community

programme across the UK, and pioneering work in virtual reality, the Philharmonia brings orchestral music to a worldwide audience. The orchestra has a rare spirit, energy and optimism and we are delighted to welcome them back to Bold Tendencies for the last of three live events this summer.

Sergei Vasilyevich Rachmaninov (1 April 1873 – 28 March 1943) was a Russian composer, pianist and conductor — one of the greatest of the Twentieth Century and of all time. Predominantly composing for the piano, Rachmaninov made use of his skills as a performer, crafting works that fully explored the expressive and technical possibilities of the instrument. Born into a musical family, Rachmaninov started playing the piano aged four. By the time of his graduation from the Moscow Conservatory in 1892, he had already composed several works for piano and orchestra. Rachmaninov and his family settled in New York City in 1918, having left Russia following the October Revolution. Rachmaninov's primary source of income became performing as a pianist and a conductor, leaving him little time to compose; he completed just six works between 1918 and 1943. In 1942 he relocated to Beverly Hills, California. In 1943 he finally became a US citizen, just a few weeks before his death from advanced melanoma.

Bold Tendencies is a non-profit arts organisation started in 2007 in Peckham, London. Bold Tendencies supports artists to develop their ideas and to realise site-specific projects and present live performances from its rooftop home, Peckham's Multi-Storey Car Park. Bold Tendencies celebrates the free enjoyment of public space in the city, welcoming participation in its rich, experimental programme and preserving open access to this special, spectacular place.

Philharmonia Orchestra

1ST VIOLIN

Eugene Lee
Tristan Gurney
Victoria Irish
Soong Choo
June Lee
Lisa Izumi
Julia Liang
Peter Fisher
Claire Sledd
Alberto Vidal
Ricky Gore
Ray Liu

2ND VIOLIN

Annabelle Meare
Emily Davis
Paula Clifton-Everest
Julian Milone
Jan Regulski
Gideon Robinson
Naori Takahashi
Tom Aldren
Clara Biss
Emanuela Buta

VIOLA

Alexander Mitchell
Gijs Kramers
Linda Kidwell
Sara Sheppard
Cheremie Hamilton-Miller
Joseph Fisher
Daichi Yoshimura
Louise Hawker

CELLO

David Cohen
Richard Birchall
Deirdre Cooper
Alexander Rolton
Yaroslava Trofymchuk
Anna Beryl

BASS

Tim Gibbs
Michael Fuller
Owen Nicolaou
Gareth Sheppard

FLUTE

Thomas Hancox
Anna Kondrashina

OBOE

Timothy Rundle
Imogen Davies

CLARINET

James Gilbert
Maria Ferreira Gomes

BASSOON

Robin O'Neill
Guylaine Eckersley

BOLD TENDENCIES

HORN

Mark Vines
Kira Doherty
Zoë Tweed
Carsten Williams
Joel Ashford

TRUMPET

Matthew Williams
Robin Totterdell

TROMBONE

Philip White
Emma Bassett

BASS TROMBONE

James Buckle

TUBA

Peter Smith

TIMPANI

Tristan Fry

PERCUSSION

Paul Stoneman
Richard Cartlidge

Philharmonia Administrators

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Ben Larpent
Bekah Cork
Stephen Ward
Per Hedberg
David Thomas
Michael Pattison
Toni Abell
Ho Kan Chung
Breony Watson

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Luca Migliore

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Ajo Kacmar

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BOLD TENDENCIES

We need your help!

Every year we fundraise to keep our programme thriving and to keep tickets affordable. This means ticket sales only cover about 5% of our costs. Every donation, however big or small, has a major impact and helps us to do more and better. Donations can be made on-site and on-line on our website.

Huge thanks to those who have supported the 2022 Programme

Southwark Council, Selfridges. Bloomberg Philanthropies, Big Issue Invest Access, Phillips, Outset Partners, Genesis Kickstart Fund, Morrisons Peckham, Vanguardia, d&b audiotechnik, J&C Joel, Steinway & Sons, Locke Hotels, CMS-CMNO, Hallett Independent Art Insurance, Think Smart Accounts, White Light and all those individuals who have generously donated.

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