

Minnesota Orchestra

Akiko Fujimoto, conductor

Cameron Carpenter, organ

Friday, March 27, 2020, 8 pm | Northrop, University of Minnesota
 Saturday, March 28, 2020, 8 pm | Northrop, University of Minnesota

Polina Nazaykinskaya	<i>Winter Bells</i>	ca. 15'
Joseph Jongen	Symphonie concertante for Organ and Orchestra, Opus 81 Allegro, molto moderato Divertimento: Molto vivo Lento misterioso Toccata (Moto perpetuo): Allegro moderato <i>Cameron Carpenter, organ</i>	ca. 36'
	I N T E R M I S S I O N	ca. 20'
Sergei Prokofiev	Selections from <i>Cinderella Suites</i> No. 1, 2 and 3, Opuses 107-109 Introduction Shawl Dance Quarrel Cinderella's Dreams Cinderella Goes to the Ball Mazurka Cinderella's Waltz Midnight Galop Valse lente Amoroso	ca. 38'

pre-concert

Concert Preview with Phillip Gainsley, Akiko Fujimoto, Cameron Carpenter and Polina Nazaykinskaya
 Friday, March 27, 6:45 pm, Best Buy Theater
 Saturday, March 28, 6:45 pm, Best Buy Theater

Minnesota Orchestra concerts are broadcast live on Friday evenings on stations of [Classical Minnesota Public Radio](#), including KSJN 99.5 FM in the Twin Cities.





Akiko Fujimoto, conductor

Conductor Akiko Fujimoto joined the Minnesota Orchestra in 2017 as assistant conductor and in 2018 became associate conductor. She conducts Young People's Concerts, Symphonic Adventures concerts for high school students, special events and outdoor concerts. This weekend's concerts mark her classical subscription series debut with the Orchestra. She was previously associate conductor of the San Antonio Symphony and conducting associate for the Virginia Symphony Orchestra. As a guest conductor, she has performed with the National Symphony Orchestra at the Kennedy Center, Houston Symphony, North Carolina Symphony, San Antonio Symphony, Corpus Christi Symphony Orchestra and Fort Wayne

Philharmonic. Additionally, she has conducted Canada's National Arts Centre Orchestra as a participant in the Young Conductors Program and the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra at the St. Magnus Festival. Recently, she was a cover conductor for Esa-Pekka Salonen, Zubin Mehta and Susanna Mälkki at the Los Angeles Philharmonic. This season she began a new role as the music director of the Mid-Texas Symphony. Her other engagements this season include appearances with the Lexington Philharmonic, Florida Orchestra and Portland Symphony Orchestra. More: minnesotaorchestra.org.



Cameron Carpenter, organ

Organist Cameron Carpenter, who debuted with the Minnesota Orchestra

in April 2018, is active as a performer and composer, and has transcribed more than 100 works for organ. In 2011 his concerto for organ and orchestra, *The Scandal*, was premiered by the Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen. In 2012 he received the Leonard Bernstein Award of the Schleswig-Holstein Musik Festival, and in 2017-18 he was artist in residence of Konzerthaus Berlin. His newest album, *Rachmaninoff & Poulenc*, is a live recording with the Berlin Konzerthaus Orchestra released on Sony Classical. It is the follow-up to *All You Need Is Bach*, which topped the Billboard Classical charts upon its release in 2016. Carpenter often tours with his own custom-built instrument, the International Touring Organ (ITO), on which he has performed on the world's most prestigious stages. His recent performance highlights include recitals with the Los Angeles Philharmonic and appearances at the Lucerne Festival, Philharmonie Cologne, Festspielhaus Baden-Baden, Philharmonie Luxembourg and Cité de la musique in Paris. More: camimusic.com, cameronearpenter.com.

one-minute notes

Nazaykinskaya: *Winter Bells*

Lush colors and mystical themes evoke an ancient Russian village, its music and its rituals.

Jongen: *Symphonie concertante for Organ and Orchestra*

Originally commissioned in 1926 to show off the magnificent organ in Wanamaker's department store in Philadelphia, Jongen's most famous composition highlights the incredible range of sound that an organ can produce, from the softest whispers to moments of earth-shaking, thunderous brilliance.

Prokofiev: *Cinderella Suite*

Each character in Prokofiev's sparkling ballet is given his or her own variation, offering myriad opportunities for the traditions of classical ballet to be utilized in the dancers' choreography. This version of Prokofiev's suite includes selections from throughout all three acts of the original ballet, presented in chronological order of the classic Cinderella story.





Polina Nazaykinskaya

Born: January 20, 1987,
Togliatti, Russia;
now living in New York City

Winter Bells

Premiered: December 11, 2009

Polina Nazaykinskaya and her symphonic poem *Winter Bells* first came to the attention of Minnesota Orchestra audiences in October 2010, in a Future Classics concert led by Osmo Vänskä featuring works by each participant in that year's Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute. It previously appeared on the Orchestra's classical subscription series in November 2014.

Winter Bells, which was inspired by the composer's sojourn to an ancient village near the Volga River, was recorded in 2010 by Sony Music Russia, and in 2012 it was performed by another Minnesota ensemble, the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra, whose music director is Minnesota Orchestra Assistant Principal Bass William Schrickel. Schrickel has since conducted three more of Nazaykinskaya's works with the Metropolitan Symphony, including the premiere of her Symphony No. 1 in 2017.

finding inspiration near home

Nazaykinskaya is a native of the area that she had traveled to for inspiration. Born in Togliatti, an industrial city on the Volga in Russia's south, she studied piano, violin and flute as a child, and as a teenager at the Moscow Conservatory she concentrated on violin and composition. She came to the U.S. to attend Yale University, where she completed a master's degree in composition and an artist diploma, working with Christopher Theofanidis and Ezra Laderman. She is now pursuing a doctorate at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, studying with Tania León. She has won numerous awards and has garnered performances by ensembles including the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, American Composers Orchestra, Russian National Orchestra, Hermitage Orchestra and Chorus, Yale Philharmonia, U.S. Army Orchestra, and St. Olaf Philharmonia in Northfield, Minnesota. Among her recent works are her first ballet, *Nostalghia*, premiered in June 2018 by the RIOULT Dance NY, and the symphonic poem *Fenix*, premiered this season by the Albany Symphony.

Nazaykinskaya has prepared her own program note to re-introduce *Winter Bells* to Minnesota Orchestra audiences. She writes:

"Each piece of music that I write comes from the depth of my heart, from the inner ocean of emotions and possibilities that are carried by the waves of memories. Just as a sculptor who frees the elusive figures from the block of marble by cutting away all that is unnecessary, I find myself carving out the musical notes from the



Polina Nazaykinskaya being interviewed by Fred Child onstage at Orchestra Hall on October 29, 2010, prior to the Minnesota Orchestra's first performance of her *Winter Bells*. At right is then-Acting Principal Bass William Schrickel, who has since conducted several of Nazaykinskaya's works with the Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra. Photo: Greg Helgeson



inspiration that visits me and calls me to compose. Perhaps for the composer, the writing of music is an act much like a meditative experience that seems to open the gates to a lost paradise and brings out the nostalgia for the infinite. This is what I felt when I was writing the symphonic poem *Winter Bells*.

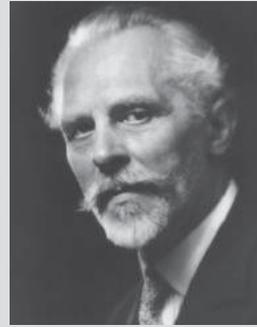
“In 2009, after finishing my first year at Yale, I was preparing to write my first symphonic work, but I did not yet have an idea for it. To find it I went back to Russia and visited an old village in my homeland, the Volga region, where I was able to connect with my roots and rekindle my imagination by visiting a series of sacred places in the wilderness. These included three mountain peaks that, when viewed from above, appeared to form a giant goblet. I was all alone in a vastness of space and rocks stretching in all directions. And then it came to me: I could discern, faintly, a choral motif, a religious motif. I sat down on a fallen tree and wrote it into my notebook.

“Once I returned and started working on my piece, I was at first caught in a dilemma about whether to have a tour de force opening or to save it for the culmination. I finally found the right key, and then the music seemed to write itself. I barely had time to move my hand scribbling it all down. I worked non-stop for several days before I rested my pen.

“When I started composing the piece, I found myself reaching for that special place within, where everything surrenders to the whispers of nature and divine harmony. *Winter Bells* has considerable personal significance for me and is one of my most cherished compositions. Creating it has been both a challenge and an enchanting delight.

“The symphony begins with a fleeting image. A Russian winter filled with void, bleakness and an eerie feeling. A traveler on a long journey and a brink of madness and desperation, fighting his way through a deadly blizzard. A vision from the past, joyous and wondrous, materializes and disappears, as a mirage in a middle of a snowy desert. Will the traveler survive? For whom shall the bells toll, when their ringing resonates at a distance? Will he be spared or will he perish before completing his journey?”

Instrumentation: 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, Chinese cymbal, suspended cymbal, triangle, glockenspiel, vibraphone, chimes, harp and strings



Joseph Jongen

Born: December 14, 1873,
Liège, Belgium

Died: July 12, 1953,
Sart-les-Spa, Belgium

Symphonie concertante for Organ and Orchestra, Opus 81

Premiered: February 11, 1928

Some instruments are luckier than others, in terms of the volume of repertoire. The piano, violin and cello all have a magnificent catalog of concertos, and there are many distinguished concertos for wind instruments as well. But the organ has not been as fortunate. Although many composers have used an organ as part of an orchestral work—and a number have written concertos for organ, or pieces that make the organ and orchestra equal participants—only a few of these have become familiar parts of the literature. Saint-Saëns’ *Symphony No. 3*, subtitled *Organ Symphony*, is probably the most famous example, and works such as Poulenc’s *Organ Concerto* (1938), Copland’s *Symphony for Organ and Orchestra* (1924) and Barber’s *Toccata Festiva* (1960) are heard with some regularity. But the number of compositions that explore the full resources of an organ and an orchestra is still relatively small.

To this number should be added Belgian composer Joseph Jongen’s *Symphonie concertante for Organ and Orchestra*. A musical prodigy, Jongen entered the Liège Conservatory at the age of 7 and remained there for 16 years, eventually earning first prizes in piano, organ and composition. He went to Paris for further study with Vincent d’Indy, then in 1903—at the age of 30—he joined the faculty of the Royal Conservatory in Brussels, where he would remain until his retirement in 1939. Jongen had fled to England during World War I, but he remained in occupied Belgium during World War II. Jongen’s son and daughter-in-law were active in the resistance, and both were imprisoned by the Nazis. Much of the composer’s energy during these years was devoted to trying to ensure their safety, and the couple did survive the war. Jongen died in 1953, a few months before what would have been his 80th birthday.

a standout composition

Jongen was an extremely prolific composer. He wrote nearly 250 compositions, including symphonies, concertos, chamber music, vocal music and a large number of works for organ. Almost all of these have disappeared from the active repertoire, and Jongen’s fame today rests largely on the *Symphonie concertante*. This

work came about in an unusual way. It was commissioned in 1926 by the American businessman Rodman Wanamaker to show off the magnificent organ that was being upgraded in Wanamaker's department store in Philadelphia. Unfortunately, Wanamaker died in 1928, before the work could be performed in Philadelphia, and he never heard the music he had commissioned. The premiere took place in Mazères on February 11, 1928, with Jongen as soloist and the orchestra conducted by Désiré Defauw.

When Jongen composed the *Symphonie concertante* in 1926, other works being written at exactly the same moment included Stravinsky's *Oedipus Rex*, Bartók's First Piano Concerto and Janáček's *Glagolitic Mass*. By comparison to these fiercely modernist scores, Jongen's music sounds conservative indeed, and its roots stretch back to the music of Franck, Fauré and Widor. The *Symphonie concertante* is in four big movements that span well over half an hour, and it was clearly conceived for a huge and magnificent organ. One of the most pleasing aspects of this music is the range of its sound, from the most delicate textures to moments that should shake the entire building.

the music: equal partners

allegro, molto moderato. The first movement begins with a fugato introduced by the strings, and this is answered by the organ's powerful entrance—the orchestra and organ will clearly be equal partners in this musical adventure. Much of the first movement is built around the shape of the opening fugato, though the strings have a singing second subject that Jongen marks *molto espressivo*. After all the energy of this movement, it comes to a surprisingly subdued conclusion marked triple *piano*.

divertimento: molto vivo. The second movement, marked *Molto vivo*, is a scherzo. Organ alone makes the initial statement, and that instrument will play by itself at many points throughout this movement. A quiet interlude marked *Religioso* intrudes on all this energy, and Jongen moves between these two tempos throughout the movement.

lento misterioso. The third movement's tempo indication is a slow *Lento*, but in the score Jongen is even more specific, noting that it should be *Lento misterioso*. Lonely woodwind solos establish a delicate, almost languid atmosphere, but gradually the strings' shimmering trills push the movement to a powerful climax, full of the sound of the large brass section. This eruption subsides, and the remainder of the music is surprisingly subdued.

toccata (moto perpetuo): allegro moderato. By contrast, the finale is brilliant. Jongen marks the organist's part *Toute la force* at the opening, and the organist plays at hyper-speed throughout the finale. This movement is very much in the tradition of the

virtuosic French toccatas for organ, and Jongen directs the organist to treat it as a perpetual motion. The mood is festive, the brass once again have much to do, and the *Symphonie concertante* drives to a thunderous conclusion that makes full use of every instrument on the stage.

Instrumentation: solo organ and orchestra comprising 3 flutes (1 doubling piccolo), 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, cymbals, triangle, harp and strings



Sergei Prokofiev

Born: April 23, 1891,
Sontsovka, Russia

Died: March 5, 1953,
Moscow, Russia

Selections from *Cinderella Suites No. 1, 2 and 3, Opuses 107-109*

Premiered: November 21, 1945

Prokofiev's ballet *Cinderella* had a difficult birth. The composer made his first sketches in May 1940, but the ballet was delayed by his work on other projects. In the spring of 1941 the 50-year-old composer suffered a heart attack, and in June of that year Hitler's Germany invaded Russia. The Soviet Union evacuated many of its artists from Moscow, and Prokofiev passed the war in such distant locales as the Caucasus, Georgia and Kazakhstan, where he worked on his major creation of the war years, an opera based on Tolstoy's *War and Peace*.

Prokofiev was finally able to return to the score of *Cinderella* during the summer of 1943, and he completed the orchestration in 1944, just before beginning one of his greatest works, the Fifth Symphony. But during the winter of 1945 Prokofiev fell and suffered a concussion from which he never fully recovered. It was not until that fall, with the war concluded, that the Bolshoi could put *Cinderella* into rehearsal. The first performance took place in Moscow on November 21, 1945, but Prokofiev—now quite frail—could not attend rehearsals, and his doctors would allow him to attend only a few performances. It had been over five and a half years since he had begun the score.

a sparkling score

One might expect music composed under such conditions to be bleak, but *Cinderella* is one of Prokofiev's freshest scores, full of sparkle, appealing melodies and color. It also has the advantage of a terrific story, and in whatever form that story takes—whether

it is Rossini's opera or this ballet or Walt Disney's cartoon—Cinderella's triumph over her stepmother and stepsisters is a wickedly satisfying experience.

Prokofiev approached the project with some specific intentions. He noted: "The fairy-tale offered a number of fascinating problems for me as a composer—the atmosphere of magic surrounding the Fairy Godmother, the twelve fantastic dwarfs that pop out of the clock as it strikes twelve, the dance *chechotka* (a kind of tap dance) reminding Cinderella that she must return home; the swift change of scene as the Prince journeys far and wide in search of Cinderella; the poetry of nature personified by the four fairies symbolizing the four seasons...apart from the dramatic structure, I was anxious to make the ballet as 'danceable' as possible, with a variety of dances that would flow from the pattern of the story, and give the dancers ample opportunity to display their art. I wrote *Cinderella* in the traditions of the old classical ballet; it has pas de deux, an adagio, gavotte, several waltzes, a pavane, passepied, bourrée, mazurka and galop. Each character has his or her variation."

And so Prokofiev, who had made his early reputation as an *enfant terrible* whose music sent audiences fleeing with their hands over their ears, took a self-consciously old-fashioned approach to writing the music for this very old story.

familiar and fresh selections

Early in 1946, a few months after the premiere of the ballet, Prokofiev arranged movements from the ballet into three orchestral suites, and these are sometimes heard today. But the present concert offers something almost unique: a generous selection of music from all three acts of the ballet, chosen by today's conductor Akiko Fujimoto and performed in correct chronological sequence. Those who know this music only from the suites will hear some familiar pleasures, but the experience will be enriched by a great deal of music that is almost never heard in the concert hall.

The *Introduction* sets the mood perfectly for the entire ballet with its mixture of two quite different kinds of music: the ominous foreboding of the beginning and a tender hopefulness that symbolizes the young Cinderella—both themes will return in various forms throughout the ballet. *Shawl Dance* introduces the snarky stepsisters, characters everyone loves to hate (Prokofiev names them Fatty and Skinny). In the *Quarrel* they argue over an embroidered shawl, and their mother solves the dispute by cutting the shawl in two, to their delight. In the gentle *Cinderella's Dreams*, she imagines what the ball must be like, while *Cinderella Goes to the Ball*, with its great waltz, is the music that brings Act I to its sparkling close. The stepsisters have already departed, and

now Cinderella—beautifully dressed by her Fairy Godmother—sets out on her own.

Act II opens with the ball in progress and a series of brilliant dances taking place—the *Mazurka* is one of these. In *Cinderella's Waltz* the prince asks Cinderella to dance, and the two of them fall in love. *Midnight* brings the ball (and Act II) to a dramatic conclusion, and—hearing the demonic tick-tocking that tells Cinderella that midnight has come—one understands why Prokofiev conceived this as a sort of wild tap dance.

The *Galop* that opens Act III includes some of the Prince's solo dances as he desperately searches for Cinderella after the ball. During the *Valse lente* the prince and Cinderella whisper their love, and *Amoroso* is the love-music that brings the ballet to its close.

Instrumentation: 2 flutes, piccolo, 2 oboes, English horn, 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, harp, piano and strings

Program notes by **Eric Bromberger**.



The Minnesota Orchestra first performed **Nazaykinskaya's *Winter Bells*** at a Future Classics concert concluding that year's Minnesota Orchestra Composer Institute on October 29, 2010, at Orchestra Hall, under the baton of Osmo Vänskä. Earlier this month, the Orchestra presented another of Nazaykinskaya's works, *My Soul Craves for the Sky*, at a "Russian Century" concert examining Russian music from the 20th and 21st centuries.

The Orchestra gave its initial performance of **Jongen's *Symphonie concertante for Organ and Orchestra*** on January 7, 1973, at Northrop Auditorium, with George Trautwein conducting and Virgil Fox as organ soloist. Earlier that month, the United Kingdom, the Republic of Ireland and Denmark all entered the European Economic Community, which later became the European Union.

Orchestra audiences first heard selections from **Prokofiev's *Cinderella*** on December 21, 1963, also at Northrop Auditorium, with Frederick Fennell on the conductor's podium. Although the Orchestra has never presented the ballet in its full form, in July 1979 it presented a choreographed version of the Suite No. 3 from *Cinderella* with dancers Galina and Valery Panova.