

**TORONTO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA**

Gustavo Gimeno, Music Director

*Tchaikovsky's Sleeping Beauty*

**Maxim Emelyanychev**, conductor  
**Michael Sweeney**, bassoon

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**Engelbert Humperdinck**  
Prelude to *Hansel and Gretel*

.....

**Marjan Mozetich**  
Concerto for Bassoon and String Orchestra  
with Marimba

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**Intermission**

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**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky/  
comp. Maxim Emelyanychev**  
Suite from *The Sleeping Beauty*, Op. 66

Prologue – Le baptême de la Princesse Aurore

Introduction

1. Marche de salon
3. Grand pas d'ensemble
4. Scène et final

Act I – Les quatre fiancés de la Princesse Aurore

5. Scène des tricoteuses
6. Grande valse villageoise
7. Entrée d'Aurore
- 8a. Grand pas d'action – Grand adage à la rose

Act II, Scene I – La chasse du Prince Désiré

10. Entr'acte
11. Colin-Maillard
15. Pas d'action
  - a. Scène d'Aurore et de Désiré
  - b. Variation d'Aurore
  - c. Petite coda

Act II, Scene II – Le château de la belle au bois dormant

19. Scène du château de sommeil
20. Scène et final – Le réveil d'Aurore

*Program 1*

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Wednesday,  
November 29, 2023

8:00pm

Thursday,  
November 30, 2023

8:00pm

Friday,  
December 1, 2023

7:30pm

Sunday,  
December 3, 2023\*

3:00pm

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\*The TSO Chamber Soloists

Sunday, December 3, 2023  
1:45pm

Nicholas Hartman, horn  
Renata Cardoso, trumpet  
James Gardiner, trumpet  
Vanessa Fralick, trombone  
Mark Tetreault, tuba

Engelbert Humperdinck  
Prelude to *Hansel and Gretel*  
(Arranged for brass quintet)

Larysa Kuzmenko  
*Impromptu and Toccata*  
for Brass Quintet

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky  
Suite from *The Nutcracker*  
(Arranged for brass quintet)



*The December 1  
performance is collectively  
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Engelbert Humperdinck (1854–1921)

## Prelude to *Hansel and Gretel*

Composed 1893

8 min

**ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK WAS BORN IN SIEGBURG, GERMANY**, on September 1, 1854, and died in Neustrelitz, Germany, on September 27, 1921. He composed the opera *Hansel and Gretel* from 1890 to 1893. Richard Strauss conducted the first performance in Weimar, Germany, on December 23, 1893.

Humperdinck's parents forced him to study architecture, despite the fact that he possessed clear musical talent.

Eventually, they relented and he began his musical education in Cologne. It was in that city that he heard Richard Wagner's operas for the first time, and they impressed him deeply. He established a personal association with Wagner that led to his involvement in producing the World Première of *Parsifal* in 1882. Recognizing that Wagner's influence was stifling the development of an individual creative style, over the following decade, Humperdinck allowed time for Wagner's shadow to recede. He kept busy in the meantime by working as a teacher, music critic, conductor, and music editor.

In April 1890, his sister Adelheid Wette asked him to set to music four folk-song texts from the Brothers Grimm fairy tale

*Hansel and Gretel*, so that her children could perform them. His family persuaded him that those selections could be expanded into a brief opera with spoken texts. The positive response to that version led him to turn the material into a full-scale opera. His busy career ensured that he needed three years to complete it. It won immediate success, and was quickly produced throughout Germany.

Several of his later works won some degree of acclaim, both in Europe and in America. But the later works—with their mismatch between the style of attractive, folk-like music cast in the styles of Wagner, Strauss, and Mahler that he had established in *Hansel and Gretel*—and the inconsistent quality of the texts he chose, ensured that they failed to garner anything like the international acclaim that *Hansel and Gretel* earned.

Hansel and his sister, Gretel, live in the forest with their parents. They become lost after their mother sends them to pick strawberries. As evening falls, the Sandman appears and lulls them to sleep. The next morning, they

encounter a wicked witch who tries to bake them in her oven. They outwit her and are happily reunited with their parents. The Prelude presents many of the opera's finest themes, beginning with the lovely children's prayer, and continuing with a series of lively, warm, and majestic melodies.

—Program note by Don Anderson



Engelbert Humperdinck—by Dane Thibeault

Marjan Mozetich (b. 1948)

## Concerto for Bassoon and String Orchestra with Marimba

Composed 2003

21 min

**MOZETICH'S CONCERTO FOR BASSOON AND STRING ORCHESTRA WITH MARIMBA** was jointly commissioned by the Ontario Arts Council and TSO Principal Bassoon Michael Sweeney. The composer admits that "it had long been my goal to compose a concerto for each of the orchestral instruments, [so] Michael's request for a bassoon concerto presented me with an ideal opportunity." For Sweeney's part, he was "thrilled at the prospect of working with a composer whose music spoke to me not only intellectually, but on a deeply satisfying emotional level as well." The piece was premièred by Sweeney and the Seiler Strings with percussionist Graham Hargrove at the Glenn Gould Studio on June 6, 2003, and has been recorded for the Aficondo label.

Among the important scores in the solo-bassoon repertoire Sweeney had given to Mozetich to study in the concertos of Antonio Vivaldi (1678–1741) were especially appealing to the composer. "Perhaps in homage to Vivaldi," Sweeney noted, "Mozetich chose to accompany his soloist with string orchestra and marimba, using the marimba somewhat as the harpsichord was used in ensemble music in Vivaldi's day—to provide forward propulsion, and most particularly, to add articulation and colour to an otherwise homogeneous string ensemble."

Mozetich describes his concerto as "a voyage beginning with an entreaty bassoon solo that invites the orchestra to participate in a journey of the pleasures and pains, joys and sadness of music." The piece unfolds in

one continuous movement, in a symmetrical form "subdivided into an introduction, allegro, adagio, allegro, and a return to the introductory material." The outermost sections feature a haunting melody over pulsating repeated figures, referencing both Vivaldi's style and contemporary minimalism. Florid, wave-like arpeggios and soaring melodic dialogue between bassoon and strings characterize the "allegro" sections, both of which drive toward energetic dance-like episodes. A poignant "adagio" is the concerto's emotional heart: bassoon muses reflectively over shuddering tremolos and swells, to which the strings respond with a deeply tender melody that the soloist then recaps with fervent intensity.

—Program note by Hannah Chan-Hartley, PhD



### COMPOSER BIO:

Award-winning Italian-Canadian composer Marjan Mozetich's compellingly beautiful music has found favour

with outstanding artists, critics, and audiences around the world. His aim is to write music that expresses beauty, sensuousness, and emotion—things that give him and his audiences pleasure.

Early in his career, Mozetich was active in avant-garde music circles. He co-founded and was artistic director (1977–1979) of the contemporary ensemble Arraymusic. Stylistically, as a composer, he has evolved over the years from avant-garde expressionism, to minimalism, to a postmodern

romanticism. Throughout, his music has remained accessible while still retaining an artistic individuality and integrity in its distinctive fusion of traditional, popular, and modern elements. His works have been performed and broadcast throughout Canada and abroad, including on airline “in flight” music programs. Mozetich has been teaching composition since 1991 at Queen’s University in Kingston, Ontario, where he resides.



## A CLOSER LOOK

### Interview with Michael Sweeney

#### How did you prepare for Mozetich’s Bassoon Concerto?

**Sweeney:** Playing Marjan Mozetich’s wonderful Concerto for Bassoon is like any concerto appearance, in that it is up to me to carry the weight of the work with the assistance of our guest conductor, Maxim Emelyanychev, and my excellent colleagues in the TSO. Beyond playing my own part, I must have a good understanding of the orchestral material and the work as a whole to assist the conductor and players in coming to a full appreciation of it in a very short amount of time. Two rehearsals in as many days is normal, so the level of intensity and concentration is rather high.

#### What’s your favourite passage in the work?

**Sweeney:** My favourite portion of the work might possibly be the slow middle section, which is marked “Adagio.” In preparation for composing his Bassoon Concerto, Mozetich asked me a lot of questions about how the bassoon has been used by other composers in both concertos and the standard orchestral repertoire. I pointed out that the low range of the instrument is mostly used in orchestral music playing softly. This planted the idea of a relatively loud and expressive moment in the middle of this slow portion. I find this section of the Adagio devastatingly beautiful in the way that it slowly crawls from the high range of the bassoon all the way to the very lowest notes.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840–1893)  
comp. Maxim Emelyanychev

## Suite from *The Sleeping Beauty*, Op. 66

Composed 1888–1889

55 min

**TCHAIKOVSKY'S HIGHLY DEVELOPED GIFTS** in rhythm, drama, and colourful orchestration made him a natural ballet composer. *Swan Lake* (1877), *The Sleeping Beauty*, and *The Nutcracker* (1892) occupy the summit of 19th-century theatrical dance music. Although *The Sleeping Beauty* is performed in its entirety less often than the other two, many authorities, including Igor Stravinsky, have deemed it the finest of the three in purely musical terms. It was commissioned by Ivan Vsevolozhsky, Director of the Imperial Theatres in St. Petersburg. He selected the scenario—about a princess awakened from a magic spell by the first kiss of true love—from French author Charles Perrault's well-known 17th-century books of fairy tales. "I want to stage it in the style of Louis XIV, allowing the musical fantasy to run high and melodies to be written in the spirit of Lully, Bach, Rameau and such-like," he wrote to Tchaikovsky.

With renowned choreographer Marius Petipa's precisely detailed requirements in hand, Tchaikovsky set joyfully to work. The

première at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg on January 15, 1890, was met with an indifferent reaction by the public and press. Everyone found the music too cool and sophisticated, too "French," for their taste. Naturally the ultra-sensitive Tchaikovsky was crushed. The tide of opinion shifted quickly, and, within a year, *The Sleeping Beauty* had become extremely popular.

Well before then, Tchaikovsky had raised with his principal music publisher, Pyotr Jurgenson, the idea of creating a *Sleeping Beauty* concert suite. Having done so, though, he couldn't decide what to leave out. It was several years after his death that a five-movement suite was published as Op. 66a (TH 234). Maxim Emelyanychev's suite, featured in these performances, is a compilation of 12 sections from the ballet score. The first



↑  
Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky—by Dane Thibeault

three (numbered 1b, 3, and 4) are all drawn from the ballet's Prologue, *Le baptême de la Princesse Aurora* (*The Baptism of Princess Aurora*), interpolating a series of dances between the opening processional and the famous showdown between the evil Carabosse and the Lilac Fairy. From there, we leap forward into Aurora's 16th-birthday celebration.

—Program note by Don Anderson



### Maxim Emelyanychev, conductor

These performances mark Maxim Emelyanychev's TSO début.

Born in 1988 into a family of musicians, Maxim Emelyanychev received his music education in his home city of Nizhny Novgorod (conducting and piano) and in Gennady Rozhdestvensky's conducting class at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory. Shortly after his conducting début at the age of 12, Emelyanychev was invited to conduct quite a few international baroque and symphonic orchestras in Russia. He was a recipient of the Young Talent Award in the Music Section of the Critics' Circle in 2019, the same year he was awarded an International Opera Award in the Newcomer category.

Laureate of numerous international harpsichord, piano, and conducting competitions, Emelyanychev was awarded the Golden Mask in 2013 for his participation as harpsichordist in the Perm Opera and Ballet Theatre production of *Le nozze di Figaro* conducted by Teodor Currentzis. Emelyanychev has recorded several albums for Warner Classics and Erato, including Haydn symphonies and concertos. For Warner Classics, he has also recorded two CDs with countertenor Jakub Józef Orliński—*Facce d'amore* and *Anima sacra*—and *Handel: Agrippina*, with Joyce DiDonato in the title role, which won the 2020 Gramophone Classical Music Award in the Opera category.

In 2019, his first recording with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra of Schubert's Symphony No. 9—the very symphony that led to his appointment as their Principal Conductor—was released on Linn Records and awarded five stars by *The Guardian*, *The Times*, and *The Scotsman*. Aparté released Emelyanychev's first solo album of Mozart sonatas on fortepiano, which won a 2018 Choc de Classica and 2019 ICMA, and his CD of the Brahms sonatas for piano and violin, with violinist Aylen Pritchkin, in 2021. In 2023, the label released Emelyanychev's first album of the complete Mozart symphonies with Il Pomo d'Oro.

Emelyanychev's 2023/24 highlights include débuts with the Symphonieorchester des Bayerischen Rundfunks, WDR Sinfonieorchester Köln, SWR Symphonieorchester Stuttgart, Deutsche Kammerphilharmonie Bremen, Toronto Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, and Mozarteum Orchestra at the Salzburg Festival. He will return to the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Rotterdam Philharmonic Orchestra, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Netherlands Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment, and Swedish Radio Symphony Orchestra.



### Michael Sweeney, bassoon

Michael Sweeney will be retiring from his role as TSO Principal Bassoon after the 2023/24 season.

Michael Sweeney has served as Principal Bassoon of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra since 1989. Over these many years, critics have consistently praised his orchestral solos, describing them as "soulful" (*The Globe and Mail*) and "full of imagination and character" (*National Post*).

As a soloist, Sweeney is most interested in Baroque, Classical, and Postmodern work. In 2003, along with the Seiler Strings and Via Salzburg, he commissioned and premièred three new works for bassoon and ensemble (including Mozetich's Concerto for Bassoon) and subsequently recorded

them alongside Mozart's Bassoon Concerto. The CD, *Mozart and Well Beyond*, was praised by *Gramophone* magazine for its "vitality" and sensitivity, and in particular for Michael's "excellent interpretation" of Mozart's concerto through which he "glides ... with stunning suppleness."

In addition to the TSO, Sweeney has performed and taught at the Aspen Music Festival and School and has appeared with the likes of the Amici Chamber Ensemble. Sweeney studied with Kay Brightman, Norman Herzberg, and Arthur Weisberg at universities in California and New York. Between his BMus and MMus degrees, he was a fellow at the Tanglewood Festival. Michael is married to Peter Eliot Weiss, who is a writer and a professor emeritus of communication in the Faculty of Applied Science & Engineering at the University of Toronto.

## Celebrating 50 Years of the TSYO

A lot can happen in 50 years, and, in memories, everything is set to music. This season, the Toronto Symphony Youth Orchestra (TSYO) celebrates its 50th anniversary as one of Canada's leading youth orchestra programs. For five decades, the TSYO has been making memories in every note, every performance, and every creative connection. Throughout the season, we will be sifting through these memories to both rediscover the TSYO's storied history and get a glimpse of what the future holds. **This journey continues with Marcus Chan, who joined the TSYO in the 2021/22 season as a double bassist.**



↑  
Marcus Chan



↑  
Marcus Chan performing with the Hong Kong Youth Music Camp

### What do you cherish most about your time with the TSYO?

**Marcus:** From my experience, the weekly rehearsals have been some of the best moments of my time at the TSYO—it's a way to escape reality. We can just enjoy the music, enjoy the rehearsal, and spend time with our friends. We all have a similar interest in music, and it is a harmonious environment. It feels like one big family and has become my second home. Ironically enough, being a part of the TSYO has brought me closer to my family in Hong Kong, as they always look forward to hearing about my performance and seeing photos and videos posted online.

One standout moment for me was the side-by-side performance we did with the TSO earlier in 2023. It's great to learn from TSO musicians, and I was lucky enough to play beside Jeffrey Beecher, the TSO's Principal Double Bass. One thing I learned from him was how to be a communicative section leader. In a performance, you need to know how to lead without speaking. I learned so much from him, especially when it comes to body language and how to use it to communicate with your colleagues on stage.



The TSYO experience is made possible thanks to the generosity of TSO donors. To support the TSYO's 50th-anniversary season and 2023/24 tour to Cleveland, scan the QR code or visit [TSO.CA/Support](https://TSO.CA/Support).