



Igor

RAYKHELSON

**Orchestral Music
Volume Three**

**Piano Concerto in G minor
Cello Concerto in B minor**

**Boris Berezovsky, piano
Alexander Kniazev, cello
Russian State Symphony
Orchestra
Hobart Earle, conductor**

FIRST RECORDINGS

IGOR RAYKHELSON: ORCHESTRAL MUSIC, VOLUME THREE

IGOR RAYKHELSON: A PROFILE

by Anastasia Belina

Igor Raykhelson was born in St Petersburg – then still called Leningrad – on 24 April 1961. He was admitted to the Leningrad-Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory in 1976 where he studied both classical and jazz piano. Early in his career he formed a jazz quartet, The Emerging Stars, which toured extensively throughout the Soviet Union. In 1979 Raykhelson moved to New York and began (classical) piano studies with Alexander Edelman, going on to tour with such eminent jazz musicians as Eddie Gomez, Joe Lock and Russia's leading saxophonist, Igor Butman. Raykhelson continued his study of classical piano, performing chamber music and appearing as orchestral soloist and recitalist. It was in 1998 that he first met the violist Yuri Bashmet, whose virtuosity has inspired several pieces of music: as well as five works recorded on earlier Toccata Classics CDs – the *Jazz Suite* for viola, saxophone, piano and strings (1998), *Reflections* for violin, viola and strings (2003), *Adagio* for viola and strings (2002) and *Little Symphony for Strings* (2005) and the Viola Concerto (2005);¹ there is also an early Viola Sonata (1999). His other major compositions to date are a Cello Sonata (2001), Piano Trio and Piano Quintet No. 1 (both 2003), Piano Quartet, *Romantic Poem* for orchestra and Piano Sonata (all 2004), Violin Sonata (2005), concertos for clarinet (2005), piano (2006), violin (2007) and cello (2010), and a string quartet (also 2010). *Senza volto*, a triple concerto for violin, viola, cello and strings, was premiered in 2013, and his Piano Quintet No. 2 in E flat minor was completed in January 2014.²

Raykhelson came to composing relatively late in his career. Until his mid-thirties he was a pianist, touring the former Soviet Union with The Emerging Stars. It was the meeting with Bashmet that changed the course of his life, when the violist asked Raykhelson to compose a work that would combine jazz and classical elements; thus was born the *Jazz Suite*. Composing the work came naturally to Raykhelson, who feels affinity with both styles. Yet he has never had any formal instruction in composition and maintains that one cannot be taught how to create music unless, of course, a student already has the natural talent and leaning

¹ Recorded on Toccata Classics TOCC 0055, released in 2007; the Violin and Viola Concertos appear on Toccata Classics TOCC 0130, released in 2012.

² His music is published by Alphonse Leduc in Paris.

towards musical inventiveness. Raykhelson thus turned to self-education, reading widely on orchestration and composition. The *Jazz Suite* opened the creative floodgates, and he has not stopped writing since; composing has become the dominant activity in his life. He writes his works as they come, without planning anything beforehand, and with no expectations or predictions about the outcome. He still performs, but feels that it is less important to him now, even though he believes that 90% of today's composers will be completely forgotten and their music unknown a century from now – humbly adding that he, of, course, may be one of them.

As both composer and performer, Raykhelson admits to having two loves – Romanticism and jazz. His music shows a fondness for jazz harmonies and melodies, combined with a Romantic approach – sweeping melodic lines, and a focus on harmonic and melodic expressiveness. Raykhelson holds jazz in high esteem because

it left us with a tremendous harmonic heritage, which even surpassed contemporary harmonic writing. Jazz has a lot to give in terms of harmonic language which, combined with melodic material and romantic music, is very enriching.³

By integrating jazz within classical styles and structures, Raykhelson continues the tradition of his illustrious countrymen Dmitry Shostakovich, Rodion Shchedrin and Nikolai Kapustin, who pay homage to jazz in their own compositions. Although jazz will always hold a special place in Raykhelson's arsenal, as he grows older and matures as a composer he is finding himself drawn more and more closely towards classical tradition – as witness the two works on this CD.

Dr Anastasia Belina-Johnson is a music-historian, writer, opera-director and Head of Classical Music at Leeds College of Music. Her primary research interests are opera, nineteenth-century Russian music and twentieth-century British music. She is the editor of A Musician Divided: André Tchaikowsky in his own Words (Toccata Classics, 2013) and Die tägliche Mühe ein Mensch zu sein (Wolke Verlag, 2013) and co-editor of Wagner in Russia, Poland and the Czech Lands: Musical, Literary and Cultural Perspectives (Ashgate, 2013) and The Business of Opera (Ashgate, forthcoming 2015).

³ Interview with the author, 27 July 2011.

PIANO CONCERTO IN G MINOR; CELLO CONCERTO IN B MINOR

by Malcolm MacDonald

It has long been a pleasure of composers to don, from time to time, the garb of a former age and write 'in the Old Style'. I am not thinking here of the countless works which take a theme by an earlier composer for variations in a later (contemporary) idiom or adopt aspects of a former style in order to give them a modern twist, but rather of works which *inhabit* that more ancient manner as if it were still the irreplaceable basis of the composer's art. One thinks, without beginning to exhaust the possibilities, of Grieg's *Holberg Suite*, Tchaikovsky's *Mozartiana Suite*, Ottorino Respighi's *Concerto all'antica* for violin and orchestra, Arnold Schoenberg's *Suite in G* for string orchestra, the late solo-cello sonatas of Max Reger (very much in the style of J. S. Bach) and so on. In the Neoclassicism of the 1920s the 'Old Style' received fresh impetus through the 'Back to Bach' movement initiated by Stravinsky, Hindemith and others; in the post-modern and polystylistic latter decades of the twentieth century the boundaries between the contemporary and the archaic were almost deliberately blurred. Alfred Schnittke, the major practitioner of 'polystylism', nevertheless still wrote a *Suite in the Old Style* where the arts of pastiche seem almost magically transmuted into the real thing. Throughout these examples, it seems almost axiomatic that the touchstone of the 'Old Style' should be the central European Baroque language as codified in Germany, France and Italy, or more rarely the language of Viennese Classicism, perhaps for their air of timeless authority. These 'old styles' have tended to be prized more highly than others. Yet as the years roll on, the chasm of charm and distance is steadily opening up between the present day and many styles of the past. And so it might seem natural for a present-day Russian composer to wish to inhabit the opulent musical mansions of Rachmaninov, Prokofiev and Shostakovich – composers almost as distant in time as Mozart was for Tchaikovsky.

It may be more helpful, therefore, to think of Igor Raykhelson composing 'in the old style', rather than being (as he describes himself) an exponent of 'Neo-Romanticism', a catch-all term that can seem to excuse many sins and solecisms. The Neo-Romantic often seems to want to abolish history (typically, the history of twentieth-century music from the arrival of Schoenberg and Stravinsky) and engage in a polemical reversion to the more innocent styles that they were seen to have supplanted or at least called into question. Practitioners of 'the old style', however defined, are on the contrary acutely aware of history, of the gulf between now and then and the pastness of past times, though it may be delightful (even for a composer as radical as Schoenberg, as he explains in 'On revient toujours'¹) to revisit them. To compose like, say, Rachmaninov, in full knowledge of the atrocious decades that came after him, is inevitably to compose somewhat differently – plus the differences imposed by individual personality, technique and training.

¹ 'On Revient Toujours' (1948), in *Style and Idea, Essays and Lectures*, ed. Leonard Stein, Faber & Faber, London, 2nd edn. 1975, pp. 108–10.

Such thoughts are prompted, most of all, by the first movement of Raykhelson's **Piano Concerto in G minor**, though to a lesser extent by all the music on this disc. In its first (three-movement) version, the Piano Concerto was completed in 2007 and premiered by the pianist Vadim Kholodenko. The second version, dedicated to Boris Berezovsky, has four movements, the work being enlarged by a scherzo in jazz style for piano alone. This version was premiered in Odessa in November 2008. Though laid out on quasi-symphonic lines, there is no doubt that the solo piano remains the focus of interest throughout. G minor is the key of Rachmaninov's Fourth Concerto, and a generalised Rachmaninovian character hangs over much of the big first movement: but if there is any specific formal model it seems more likely to be the equivalent movement of Rachmaninov's Third (C minor) Concerto. Raykhelson's Concerto begins *Moderato affetuoso* [1] with a suave melody in octaves, which is taken up across the orchestra, though the very busy, fully textured solo part – clearly conceived with a virtuoso executant in mind – seldom falls silent. The movement is structured as a broad, traditional sonata form, but the lyrical contrast which functions as second subject (*leggero*, first delivered by violins) is actually a more expansive, major-key variant of the opening theme. The tonality moves to A for a kind of codetta theme, a more rhythmic third idea (*più mosso*) with percussion background, beginning as short phrases answering one another between low strings and piano.

A plunge into C minor with swirling solo arpeggios sets off an extended development section, and soon arrives at a *molto agitato* solo-piano version of the lyric variant of the main theme, in A. Soon afterwards Raykhelson unleashes the heavy brass, silent up till now, and the music drives on excitingly until it arrives at the principal cadenza of the work, a bravura affair reviewing the material and steering the tonality round to the tonic G minor once again. But that does not signal the end of the development: the cadenza is situated more or less at the mid-point of the movement, and further development ensues, rising to a passionate climax before a return of the rhythmic codetta theme concludes this part of the proceedings and makes a second cadence into G minor, where the recapitulation begins with the suave main theme presented very much as at the outset. After starting in this orthodox manner the rest of the recapitulation is much compressed, naturally now omitting the codetta theme, and hurries on to a lively *scherzando* coda in G major that brings the movement to a breathtaking close.

There is little of the romanticism of the first movement in the *Grave* slow movement [2], which speaks in more mid-twentieth-century accents, redolent rather of a Russian winter in a time of repression. Here Shostakovich, if anyone, might be the inspiration, though the music is entirely conceived in Raykhelson's own terms. The piano, unaccompanied, opens this movement – which is cast in a sombre E flat minor – with a meditative 33-bar theme, clearly elegiac in character, with a hint of depressive Russian folksong and a stealthy dotted-rhythm tread. The movement then unfolds, in orchestra, piano, and both combined, largely as a series of variants either on the theme itself or on its harmonic background. Stark brass and plangent woodwind sonorities, and sudden percussion impacts, allow the main idea to take on at one point the character of a chorale, at another that of a funeral march. About half-way through, a solo clarinet introduces a more lyrical, aspiring theme against

a soft rhythmic background from stopped horns, which is developed to the only real climax of the movement. For coda the piano restates the opening theme, now with string accompaniment and a nagging march-rhythm on side-drum.

There could scarcely be a starker contrast between this movement and what follows – a little *Presto* scherzo in C minor for the pianist alone [3]. It is in this tiny whirlwind, dedicated to Boris Berezovsky, that Raykhelson's experience as a jazz pianist and composer naturally comes to the fore. Though cast in a vestigial ternary form, the movement gives the impression of a bravura jazz improvisation, drawing on the traditions of ragtime right up to the keyboard prestidigitations of Art Tatum and Raykhelson's compatriot Nikolai Kapustin. In style, texture and atmosphere it adds an entirely new expressive dimension to the Concerto.

Like the slow movement, the *Allegro moderato* finale [4] is essentially built out of one theme, but varied with such skill and fantasy that the ear does not tire of it. The theme in question, a lithe and debonair affair not without its own hints of jazz harmonies and a discreet hint of Poulenc in its ancestry, is announced at once by the piano, taken up by the strings, and given a brief work-out by the soloist and various sections of the orchestra. Raykhelson then launches it into a lively fugue, complete with a new counter-subject: both subjects are treated at some length before the key shifts to B major and a contrastingly ardent *dolce* tune. But the music based on this tune proves to be only an episode: the piano urges the claims of the opening theme of the finale – still in B major – and starts what sounds as if it is going to be a second fugue, but instead the theme is developed through being fragmented and broken up across the orchestra, with a cadenza-like final appearance from the soloist before the tonic G minor is reasserted and the Concerto storms to a punctual, indeed precipitate, end.

The **Cello Concerto in B minor** (2010), dedicated to Alexander Kniazev and premiered in Moscow in April 2011, is also cast in four movements, but although – as in the Piano Concerto – the soloist is kept busy virtually without pause, the impression here is less of a concerto and more of a symphony with cello obbligato. Here the gestures and rhetoric recall a somewhat later generation of Russian composers, most notably Prokofiev, though the manner of proceeding is entirely Raykhelson's own. The entire range of the cello is almost constantly in play, with many of the most significant events occurring in its upper registers. The overall tonality is B minor, in which the first movement opens: the music traverses many subsidiary regions, though these are usually interpreted quite freely with plenty of chromatic expansion.

The first movement (*Moderato mosso*) bears the title 'Poem' and is a large, apparently rhapsodic utterance [5]. Structurally it resembles a sonata-form movement with exposition and extended development but no recapitulation, the return to the opening material being reserved for a comparatively brief coda. It opens with the cello soliloquising on an arching, wide-ranging phrase which will prove to be a motto-theme that recurs in other movements. This cello phrase and its continuation can be thought of as the first subject, to which Raykhelson poses a contrastingly lyrical theme (the second subject) in a dialogue between cello and flute, initially in G sharp minor. This idea is developed in collaboration with the orchestra until the soloist returns to the soliloquising first

theme, this time in C sharp minor and more urgent and agitated in character, until the lyrical second subject breaks out again *fortissimo*, shared between solo cello and the strings of the orchestra.

A sudden turn to E flat minor heralds the beginning of the development section, *Molto agitato*. This part of the movement falls into three large waves – the first passing into D minor with increased urgency and bravura solo-writing. The second stage is a kind of expressive plateau, *Moderato mosso* in C major, where Raykhelson introduces a new and tender idea sung by the cello solo over a delicately scored accompaniment of divided orchestral cellos. This music gathers force and then subsides, and the third part of the development strikes in with rushing figuration in C sharp minor. Here again there is furious, stormy activity, with the cello part going into vertiginous octave-writing. It appears to be driving to a climax but is brought up short by an emphatic *fortissimo* restatement of the lyrical second subject, now in the tonic B minor, which provides the climax of the movement. After this climactic gesture, the soloist introduces a last brief reminiscence of the motto-theme and the movement subsides to a very quiet end.

The second movement – the scherzo of the symphonic scheme – is a very short but brilliant Toccata in G minor scored only for solo cello and strings and marked *Allegro* [6]. With its stumbling, scrambling rhythms (constantly alternating bars of 3/4 and 2/4, with the occasional interpolated irrational value such as 13/16), obstinately repeating motifs, crisp and even percussive writing, hints of jazz and fleeting central major-key melodic flowering, it traverses a lot of ground in a short space.

The ensuing E minor *Adagio* [7] could hardly constitute a more marked contrast. Entitled ‘Elegy’, which well suits its melancholic vein, it is the expressive heart of the concerto, and the most timelessly Russian in its mode of utterance. It begins with a short, chordal ‘Recitativo’ for the solo cello – a variant of the motto-theme, in grave triple- and quadruple-stopping – and the cello takes the lead in the gently lyrical music that follows, sparsely accompanied in the orchestra. Sadly serene at first, it becomes more troubled, passing rapidly through the directions *Un poco agitato* to *Agitato* and then *Molto agitato* (this last with a new aspiring theme in octaves in the violins). Almost immediately the growing turmoil is assuaged as the cello gives out a further, long-breathed *molto espressivo* theme in B major, before a *lamentoso* outcry introduces yet another new idea – a warmly romantic, almost Rachmaninovian, cello melody, in counterpoint with the horns, that Raykhelson labels *vspominayya* (‘remembering’). This melody seems to be developing with confidence when it is broken up, *Subito molto agitato*, into fevered phrases against dissonant orchestral chords and percussion attacks. At this climactic point the opening chordal ‘Recitativo’ returns in E minor. The gentle passage that followed it at the outset of the movement also returns and the music dies away over a soft gong-stroke.

The vigorous Finale [8] has something of an arch shape, the principal subjects returning in reverse order in the second half of the movement. It starts off *Allegro maestoso e con brio* in B minor with a pugnacious, scrambling cello theme (the opening phrase derives from the motto theme, though this fact is unlikely to be audible in the rapid stream of notes) against heavy orchestral chords. A broader contrasting subject, marked *agitato*, then

appears on strings and woodwind against pulsing horns; it is taken up and lyrically elaborated by the cello soloist, who dissolves it into more plastic shapes and eventually into a stream of virtuoso figuration. The figuration becomes a series of arpeggios, against which strings and flute recall the motto-theme, *dolce*. A brief cello cadenza then links to a return of the *agitato* theme in D major, with the cello soloist's continuation as before, which this time leads back to B minor and the pugnacious opening theme. In a terse, decisive coda, the horns restate the motto-theme against a final flurry of pyrotechnics from the soloist.

Malcolm MacDonald is the author of the volume on Brahms in the 'Master Musicians' series (Oxford University Press, Oxford and New York, 2002). He has also written The Symphonies of Havergal Brian (three vols., Kahn & Averill, London, 1974, 1978 and 1983) and edited the first two volumes of Havergal Brian on Music (Toccata Press, London, 1985 and 2009); further volumes are in preparation. His other writings include books on John Foulds, Schoenberg, Ronald Stevenson and Edgard Varèse.

Born in Moscow, **Boris Berezovsky** studied at the Moscow Conservatory with Eliso Virsaladze and privately with Alexander Satz. Subsequent to his London debut at Wigmore Hall in 1988, *The Times* described him as 'an artist of exceptional promise, a player of dazzling virtuosity and formidable power'. Two years later, he won the Gold Medal at the 1990 International Tchaikovsky Competition in Moscow. Now he is a regular guest of the world's major orchestras and a frequent guest on its most important recital stages.

His solo discography is of some size. With Teldec he has recorded music by Balakirev, Chopin, Liszt, Medtner, Mussorgsky, Rachmaninov, Ravel and Schumann. His recording of the Rachmaninov sonatas was awarded the Preis der Deutschen Schallplattenkritik, a Ravel disc was recommended by *Le Monde de la Musique*, *Diapason* and *BBC Music Magazine*, and his Chopin/Godowsky recording won a *BBC Music Magazine* Award. His recordings for Mirare include Rachmaninov Preludes, the complete Rachmaninov piano concertos with the Ural Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Dmitri Liss, and a two-piano Rachmaninov CD with Brigitte Engerer. His recording of Saint-Saëns' *Carnaval des Animaux* with Brigitte Engerer and Henri Demarquette won a Choc de la Musique in 2010. The partners with whom Boris Berezovsky has recorded chamber music include Alexander Kniazev, Dmitri Makhtin, Vadim Repin and the Borodin Quartet. Their CDs have been awarded Diapason d'Or, Choc de la Musique and Echo awards.

Boris Berezovsky has been Artistic Director of Pianoscope Beauvais since 2013.



Alexander Kniazev was born in 1961 in Moscow and began to study cello with Alexander Fedorchenko from the age of six. He was a student at the Moscow Conservatoire from 1979 to 1986. As an organist he is a graduate also of the Nizhny Novgorod Conservatoire, where he studied with Professor G. Kozlova. He won first prize in the National Competition in Vilnius (1977), third prize in the Gaspar Cassadó International Competition in Florence (1979), first prize, in a duo with Ekaterina Voskressenskaya, in the Chamber Music International Competition in Trapani, Italy, in 1987, second prize in the Tchaikovsky International Competition in Moscow in 1990, and first prize in the UNISA International Competition in Pretoria in 1992.

The conductors under whom he has since played as soloist include Evgeny Svetlanov, Yuri Temirkanov, Mstislav Rostropovitch, Yuri Bashmet, Vladimir Fedoseyev, Maxim Shostakovich, Neeme Järvi, Kurt Masur and Alexander Vedernikov, with such orchestras as the USSR State Symphony, Wiener Symphoniker, Royal Philharmonic, Bavarian Radio, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, Gothenburg Symphony, Den Haag Residentie, Orchestre National de France and Prague Philharmonic.

His enormous repertoire includes a huge number of cello compositions and many works for organ. He continues to add to the cello repertoire. In January 2000 he first performed his own arrangement of the Chaconne from Bach D minor Partita for violin, and in April of the same year he performed five Mozart 'cello concertos', including the *Sinfonia concertante* arranged for violin and cello. In December 2002 he premiered a programme of forty Brahms songs arranged for cello and piano. He gave the first performance of Igor Raykhelson's Cello Sonata in 2001, with the composer at the piano, and premiered his Cello Concerto in 2011.

His recordings include Bloch's *Schelomo* with Svetlanov and the Reger cello sonatas with Edouard Oganessian – with whom he recorded three of his own transcriptions of Mozart violin sonatas for Toccata Classics (TOCC 0002). For Warner Classics he recorded the Bach cello suites.

His chamber-music partners include Evgeny Kissin, Vadim Repin, Boris Berezovsky, Plamena Mangova and Nikolai Lugansky. In 2012 Martha Argerich invited him to play at her Lugano Festival. He has also performed in a trio with Boris Berezovsky and Dmitri Makhtin, appearing in the Concertgebouw Amsterdam, the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, the Wigmore Hall in London, the Salzburg Festival and at the Lincoln Center in New York. Their Tchaikovsky DVD, with pieces for piano, violin and cello and the *Trio Elégiaque*, was awarded a Diapason d'Or. For Warner Classics they have recorded the Shostakovich Second Piano Trio and the Rachmaninov *Trio Elégiaque*, which won a *Gramophone* award, a Diapason d'Or and an Echo award.



Born in Venezuela of American parents, **Hobart Earle** has developed a reputation as a dynamic and exciting conductor on several continents. Currently Music Director and Principal Conductor of the Odessa Philharmonic Orchestra, he has elevated the orchestra to a position of international prominence unprecedented in its history. He has led hundreds of concerts with the Odessa Philharmonic – in the major concert halls of the United States, Canada, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Russia, Spain, Switzerland and throughout Ukraine. In Europe, he has led such orchestras as the Vienna Chamber, the Vienna Tonkünstler, the Noord-Nederlands Orkest, the Bilbao Symphony, the Orchestra della Toscana and Orchestra Sinfonica Siciliana, the Athens State Symphony, the Krakow Philharmonic, Sinfonia Iuventus in Warsaw and, in the USA, the Buffalo Philharmonic, North Carolina Symphony, Florida Philharmonic, Miami Symphony and San Diego Chamber orchestras. In Asia he has been a guest of the Taipei Symphony, Thailand Philharmonic and Southeast Asian Youth orchestras. In recent years, he has appeared frequently in Russia with, in Moscow, the Russian State Symphony, Novaya Rossiya Symphony and the Moscow State Symphony Orchestras, as well as at the Philharmonic in St Petersburg. And during the 2010–11 season he conducted new productions of Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Snow Queen* and Minkus' *Don Quixote* at the Greek National Opera in Athens.



In recognition of his work with the Odessa Philharmonic Orchestra, Hobart Earle was awarded the titles Distinguished Artist of Ukraine and People's Artist of Ukraine, the first foreigner in the history of the country so honoured. In 2003, in conjunction with leading newspapers in Ukraine, the Russian Cosmonaut Association named a star in the Perseus constellation as 'Hobart Earle'.

As founder and music director of the American Music Ensemble Vienna/Ensemble for Viennese Music New York from 1987 to 1991, Hobart Earle premiered many works by living composers in addition to reviving several lesser-known compositions from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. During his tenure in Odessa, Hobart Earle has also led numerous performances of repertoire never before heard there, among them Mahler's Second, Third, Sixth and Ninth and Bruckner's Eighth Symphonies, Strauss' *Four Last Songs*, Elgar's 'Enigma' Variations, Berg's *Three Excerpts from Wozzeck*, Holst's *The Planets*, Copland's *El Salón Mexico* and *Lincoln Portrait* and Bernstein's Symphony No. 1, *Jeremiah*.

Hobart Earle and the American Music Ensemble Vienna can be heard on two CDs of American music on Albany, including music by George Whitefield Chadwick, Henry Gilbert and Miguel del Aguila. On ASV he recorded two CDs with the Odessa Philharmonic Orchestra of previously unrecorded music by the Ukrainian composers Mykola Kolessa, Myroslav Skoryk, Yevhen Stankovych and Reinhold Gliere.

A student of Ferdinand Leitner in Salzburg and Leonard Bernstein and Seiji Ozawa at Tanglewood, Hobart Earle studied conducting at the Academy of Music in Vienna; received a performer's diploma in clarinet from Trinity College of Music, London; and is a *magna cum laude* graduate of Princeton University, where he studied composition with Milton Babbitt, Edward Cone, Paul Lansky and Claudio Spies. In 2007 he was awarded the title of Honorary Professor of the Academy of Music in Odessa.

The **Russian State Symphony Orchestra** is one of the country's oldest symphonic ensembles: its debut performance took place on 5 October 1936, at the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory under the direction of Alexander Gauk and Erich Kleiber. From its inception, the orchestra has been led by outstanding musicians: as well as Gauk (1936–41), there were Natan Rakhlin (1941–45), Konstantin Ivanov (1945–65) and Evgeny Svetlanov (1965–2000). Under Svetlanov's leadership the orchestra became one of the world's best, and its repertoire grew to include virtually all the major Russian symphonic repertoire, many western classics and works by contemporary composers. In 2005 the orchestra took his name and is now also known as the Svetlanov Symphony Orchestra. From 2000 to 2002 the orchestra was headed by Vassily Sinaisky, and from 2002 to 2011 by Mark Gorenstein. On 24 October 2011 Vladimir Jurowski was appointed Artistic Director.

Ever since its first tour abroad in 1956, the orchestra has regularly represented Russian culture around the world, travelling to Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, South Korea, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, the USA and many other countries.

Although the orchestra's discography includes hundreds of recordings on Russian and foreign labels, pride of place goes to 'Anthology of the Russian Symphonic Music', a project, encompassing composers from Glinka to Stravinsky, to which Evgeny Svetlanov dedicated many years.



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Recording engineers: Maria Soboleva (Piano Concerto) and Pavel Lavrenkov (Cello Concerto)

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A *Fanfare* review described Igor Raykhelson's music – in the Toccata Classics release of his Violin and Viola Concertos – as 'a world of unreconstructed and unapologetic Romanticism'; two customer reviews on Amazon wrote of 'beautiful music that draws me into another zone' and 'a delicate, airy beauty that is unique in modern classical music'. Raykhelson's concertos for piano (2007) and cello (2010), written for the two soloists on this recording, maintain the emphasis on a melodic language with its roots in the music of Rachmaninov and Prokofiev.



TOCC 0219

IGOR RAYKHELSON Orchestral Music, Volume Three

Piano Concerto in G minor (2007)

- 1** I *Moderato affettuoso* –
- 2** II *Grave* –
- 3** III *Presto* –
- 4** IV *Allegro moderato*

32:48

- 11:52
- 11:40
- 2:55
- 6:20

Cello Concerto in B minor (2010)

- 5** I *Moderato mosso*
- 6** II *Allegro*
- 7** III *Adagio*
- 8** IV *Allegro maestoso con brio*

26:36

- 11:03
- 1:43
- 9:35
- 4:15

Boris Berezovsky, piano **1**–**4**

Alexander Kniazev, cello **5**–**8**

Russian State Symphony Orchestra

Hobart Earle, conductor

TT 59:24

FIRST RECORDINGS

Comment on Igor Raykhelson's Violin and Viola Concertos:

'the 31-minute violin concerto here (2007), a response to the intense passions of meeting his second wife, is an unabashed, neo-Romantic work with "big tunes" that is in a direct line from Korngold. The viola work (2005) returns to a crossoverish style, with Rachmaninov and Prokofiev often suggested by the openhearted lyricism of its first three movements while the finale, in response to a direct request by soloist Bashmet for jazz elements, recreates a jazz bar, complete with drummer beginning the movement in swing rhythm.'

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