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Recorded live in concert at the S. Mark Taper Foundation Auditorium, Benaroya Hall, Seattle, Washington. Stravinsky's *The Firebird* was recorded live in concert on June 19 & 21, 2014. Nikolaev's *The Sinewaveland* was recorded live in concert on October 18, 2011.

The performance of *The Sinewaveland* was sponsored by The Boeing Company, with additional support from Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, Argosy Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts.

*The Sinewaveland* – © 2011, Vladimir Nikolaev

Producer: Dmitriy Lipay  
Engineers: Dmitriy Lipay & Alexander Lipay  
Executive Producer: Simon Woods  
Art direction and design: Jessica Forsythe

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SEATTLE **SYMPHONY** LUDOVIC MORLOT

**STRAVINSKY**  
THE FIREBIRD

**NIKOLAEV**  
THE SINEWAVELAND



serious music opened up with rock music rather than Mozart or Beethoven.”

Though the score of *The Sinewaveland* does not include any direct quotations from Hendrix’s music, the overall sonic environment of the piece is clearly reflective of his approach: the piece breathes with improvisatory flair; some unusual sound effects might seem reminiscent of *The Jimi Hendrix Experience*’s recordings; and there is an acute sense of theatricality. The orchestration does not include any rock instruments, especially guitar, but Nikolaev makes the entire orchestra sound as if it were a single organism — a guitar in the conductor’s hands.

The piece opens with a simple, bouncy motive that, through a series of frenetic glissandi by the strings, is transformed into an irregular but gripping drum pulse, and suddenly the entire orchestra begins swaying like a rock band. In the ensuing slow section, the harp and marimba figurations underline the elusive harmonies surrounded by a rainstick whisper in an idyllic aura of natural beauty. The last section begins with radiant triadic chords in the strings that summon a gorgeous world of imaginary visions. This world slowly populates with punctuated motives that eventually sweep the entire orchestra into a mesmerizing swing. The piece ends abruptly with the musicians yelling “Yeah,” as if in disbelief that a traditional symphonic ensemble could produce such a display of rock-and-roll elements.

Notes by Elena Dubinets © 2016 Seattle Symphony

## NIKOLAEV

### THE SINEWAVELAND: HOMAGE TO JIMI HENDRIX

Vladimir Nikolaev (b. 1953) is among the most-respected Russian composers from the post-Schnittke generation who has found a unique voice outside of academic mainstream. In his works, he creates a tightly pre-considered but incredibly genuine sound world inspired by the natural drive of rock music and filled with light folkloric touches and humor. Having received a PhD in composition from the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, he has won prizes at the International Lutosławski Competition (1991) and the Boulanger Memorial Fund Competition (1992) and, in 1997 and 2001, he worked in the studio of L'Institut international de musique électroacoustique de Bourges in France. His ambitious ballets, *Gold of Narts* (2003) and *Gereven* (2012), were staged in two of the most prestigious Russian theaters, Bolshoi and Perm, respectively.

A special place is occupied in Nikolaev's oeuvre by the compositions that stand on the crossroads of classical and rock music. In 2003 he wrote *Through the Broken Glass* for rock group and orchestra based on the legacy of Pink Floyd. His most inspired attempt at this genre was produced when the Seattle Symphony commissioned Nikolaev to write a piece for its Sonic Evolution series that features orchestral commentary on Seattle's legacy of inventive and groundbreaking music and art.

The result of this commission, *The Sinewaveland* (2011), is an homage to Jimi Hendrix. Nikolaev recalls: "He was my idol already during my school years! I listened spellbound to his albums which were accessible in the USSR only on the overused reels. I learned to play the guitar by listening to his recordings. His music combines spontaneity, lack of restraint and improvisational approach with well-composed forms, refinement and accuracy of details. It may seem unusual, but my path into

## SEATTLE SYMPHONY

The Seattle Symphony is one of America's leading symphony orchestras and is internationally acclaimed for its innovative programming and extensive recording history. Under the leadership of Music Director Ludovic Morlot since September 2011, the Symphony is heard from September through July by more than 500,000 people through live performances and radio broadcasts. It performs in one of the finest modern concert halls in the world — the acoustically superb Benaroya Hall — in downtown Seattle. Its extensive education and community engagement programs reach over 65,000 children and adults each year. The Seattle Symphony has a deep commitment to new music, commissioning many works by living composers each season. The orchestra has made nearly 150 recordings and has received two Grammy Awards, 21 Grammy nominations, two Emmy Awards and numerous other accolades. In 2014 the Symphony launched its in-house recording label, Seattle Symphony Media.

## LUDOVIC MORLOT, CONDUCTOR

As the Seattle Symphony's Music Director, Ludovic Morlot has been received with extraordinary enthusiasm by musicians and audiences alike, who have praised him for his deeply musical interpretations, his innovative programming and his focus on community collaboration. From 2012 to 2014 Morlot was also Chief Conductor of La Monnaie, one of Europe's most prestigious opera houses.

In the U.S., Ludovic Morlot has conducted the Boston Symphony Orchestra, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, Los Angeles Philharmonic, New York Philharmonic, Philadelphia Orchestra and Pittsburgh Symphony. Additionally, he has conducted the Budapest Festival Orchestra, Czech Philharmonic, Danish National Symphony Orchestra, Dresden Staatskapelle, London Philharmonic Orchestra, Orchestre National de France, Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra, Rundfunk-Sinfonieorchester Berlin, Tokyo Philharmonic Orchestra and the Tonhalle-Orchester Zürich.

Trained as a violinist, Morlot studied conducting at the Royal Academy of Music in London and then at the Royal College of Music as recipient of the Norman del Mar Conducting Fellowship. Morlot was elected a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Music in 2014 in recognition of his significant contributions to music. He is Chair of Orchestral Conducting Studies at the University of Washington School of Music.

than a decade. Moreover, it established the compositional language with which those works would be fashioned. This last is easily overlooked, since *The Firebird* most obviously embodies a kind of Russian Impressionism whose debts of influence to Stravinsky's teacher, Rimsky-Korsakov, and to Debussy are quite evident. But the melodic idiom, the asymmetry of rhythm and phrase length, and the bold use of the orchestra established here became foundations of Stravinsky's coming work. He would extend them in an unprecedented and epoch-making with his next major compositions, the ballets *Petrushka* and *The Rite of Spring*. *The Firebird* marked the end of the initial phase of Stravinsky's development as a composer, but it pointed to the future as well.

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Now the scene changes to where the princesses are held. Their captivity cannot be too harsh, since they are playing with golden apples; Stravinsky conveys their game in an effervescent scherzo. Prince Ivan comes upon them (horn solo) and watches as they perform a gentle round dance to a song-like melody initially presented by solo oboe over harp accompaniment.

The ballet's second act, or tableau, takes place the following day, when, at dawn, Prince Ivan makes his way to Kastchei's palace (a passage begun by nervous trumpet signals). There he comes upon a magical carillon, its playing suggested in virtuoso orchestral writing, but is taken prisoner by the demons who guard it. Kastchei himself appears, his approach indicated by sinister sounds from brass and percussion. The princesses try to intercede on Ivan's behalf (dulcet phrases for violin and woodwinds), to no avail. But the Firebird's magic feather protects the prince until the Firebird herself appears. Kastchei's demons try to seize her, but under her magic their attack turns into an "Infernal Dance," fierce but harmless. Characterized by angular rhythms and harsh outbursts from the brass, this entire sequence is brilliantly orchestrated, and we can scarcely imagine today the impact its tremendous energy must have made on audiences in 1910.

The Firebird then lulls Kastchei and his demons to sleep with a haunting berceuse, or lullaby. Ivan smashes the egg containing Kastchei's soul, and deep shadows fall over the scene, indicated by quiet, slow-moving tremolo figures in the strings. Now the princesses and knights imprisoned by Kastchei's magic are released as a melody announced by the horn is gradually taken up by the full orchestra and repeated in ever more sonorous instrumentation, building to an imposing climax in the final measures.

*The Firebird* was Stravinsky's first truly important composition, and it initiated a series of scores based on Russian stories and folk verses that would occupy him for more



# SEATTLE SYMPHONY

## LUDOVIC MORLOT

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Eric Garcia & Stilian Kirov, *Douglas F. King Assistant Conductors*

Joseph Crnko, *Associate Conductor for Choral Activities*

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*Clowes Family  
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*Assistant Concertmaster*  
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*Second Assistant  
Concertmaster*  
Jennifer Bai  
Mariel Bailey  
Cecilia Poellein Buss  
Ayako Gamo  
Timothy Garland  
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Cordula Merks  
Mikhail Shmidt  
Clark Story  
John Weller  
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Arthur Zadinsky  
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Victoria Parker \*

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*Supported by Jean E. McTavish*  
Michael Miropolsky ^  
John & Carmen Delo  
*Assistant Principal*  
*Second Violin*  
Kathleen Boyer

Gennady Filimonov  
Evan Anderson  
Stephen Bryant  
Linda Cole  
Xiao-po Fei  
Sande Gillette  
Artur Girsy  
Mae Lin  
Virginia Hunt Luce  
Eric Scott  
Andrew Yeung  
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Jennifer Caine Provine \*

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*PONCHO  
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Arie Schächter  
*Assistant Principal*  
Mara Gearman  
Timothy Hale  
Vincent Comer  
Penelope Crane  
Wesley Anderson Dyring  
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Meeka Quan DiLorenzo  
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Theresa Benshoof  
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Roberta Hansen Downey  
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Jordan Anderson  
*Mr. & Mrs. Harold H.  
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Joseph Kaufman  
*Assistant Principal*  
Jonathan Burnstein  
Jennifer Godfrey  
Travis Gore  
Jonathan Green  
Nancy Page Griffin

### FLUTE

Demarre McGill  
*Principal, Supported  
by David J. and Shelley  
Hovind*  
Judy Washburn Kriewall  
Zartouhi Dombourian-Eby  
Alexander Lipay ^ \*  
Robin Peery \*

1910, and its enthusiastic reception effectively launched Stravinsky's career.

*The Firebird* relates a fantastic tale drawn from Russian folklore. Wandering alone in a deep wood, Prince Ivan, son of the Czar, comes upon the mythical Firebird. Quickly he seizes the creature, but when she offers a magic feather as ransom, he frees her. Continuing on his way, the Prince encounters 13 princesses, who are under the spell of Kastchei, a demon of terrible power. Ivan follows the princesses to Kastchei's castle and soon is captured by its master's guards. But he remembers the feather, and its magic renders Kastchei's spells harmless. The Firebird appears and shows the Prince an egg containing the monster's soul. Ivan smashes it, destroying Kastchei and freeing his prisoners.

Although Stravinsky spoke critically of *The Firebird* in his later years — the story “demanded descriptive music of a kind I did not want to write” and the orchestra he used was “wastefully large,” he complained in one of his book-length conversations with the conductor and writer Robert Craft — it has become one of his most popular works. It is best known through the concert suites the composer extracted from the full ballet score in 1911, 1919 and again in 1945. However, the complete ballet score also can be played as a concert piece, as it is in this recording.

The first sections set the scene and introduce the principal characters of the fairy tale drama. The initial measures suggest Prince Ivan wandering in the forest and coming upon Kastchei's enchanted garden. There is an air of mystery and danger in the music of the low strings that begins the ballet, in the menacing horn figures that punctuate this, and especially in the glissando harmonics (the eerie, sliding sonorities produced by the strings, an effect whose novelty Stravinsky noted with some pride). Soon we encounter the Firebird, whose music certainly gives the impression of a colorful and fantastic creature. Captured by Prince Ivan, she pleads for freedom to music marked by sinuous melodic arabesques, finally bartering her magic feather for her liberty.

## STRAVINSKY THE FIREBIRD

In the spring of 1909, a troupe of Russian dancers, musicians and stage designers converged on Paris for a short season of ballet and opera presentations. Though few could have guessed it at the time, the Ballets Russes, or “Russian Ballets,” as it was called, would decisively impact the development of dance and music in the 20th century. Thanks largely to the vision of its enterprising leader, Serge Diaghilev, the company became the spiritual home to some of the most innovative artists of the early modern period. Picasso, Cocteau, Nijinsky and others hardly less famous all worked on productions for Diaghilev’s enterprise. So, too, did a number of outstanding composers, including Igor Stravinsky.

Stravinsky’s association with the Ballets Russes would last two decades and prove one of the most fruitful artistic collaborations in history. Through Diaghilev, the composer came into contact with some of the leading creative figures of his day, and for his company he produced the works that initially secured his fame. The first of those works was music for the ballet *The Firebird*.

Following his first Paris season, Diaghilev determined to produce a piece based on Russian legend, and the scenario for *The Firebird*, fashioned from parts of several folk tales, suited his purposes exactly. Originally, the impresario hoped to obtain music for the production from Anatol Liadov, an established composer. But when Liadov could not promise timely completion of the work, Diaghilev approached Stravinsky. The composer worked on the score throughout the winter of 1909–10, and by mid-April he was able to send the score from Saint Petersburg, where he still was living, to Paris. *The Firebird* was presented by the Ballets Russes on June 25,

### PICCOLO

Zartouhi Dombourian-Eby  
Robert & Clodagh  
Ash Piccolo

### OBOE

Ben Hausmann  
Principal  
Chengwen Winnie Lai  
Stefan Farkas  
Shannon Spicciati •  
Dan Williams •

### ENGLISH HORN

Stefan Farkas

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Dr. Robert Wallace Clarinet  
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Larey McDaniel

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Mike Gamburg

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Charles Simonyi  
Principal Horn

### Mark Robbins

Associate Principal  
Jonathan Karschney \*  
Assistant Principal  
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Susan Carroll  
Bruce Hudson •  
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Boeing Company  
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Associate Principal  
Alexander White ^ \*  
Assistant Principal  
Geoffrey Bergler  
Anthony DiLorenzo •

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Ko-ichiro Yamamoto  
Principal  
David Lawrence Ritt  
Stephen Fissel

### BASS TROMBONE

Stephen Fissel

### TUBA

Christopher Olka  
Principal

### TIMPANI

Michael Crusoe  
Principal

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Principal  
Michael Clark  
Ron Johnson ‡  
Matthew Kocmieroski •  
Daniel Morris •  
Rob Tucker •

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Principal  
Supported by Eliza Flug, in  
memory of Martin Flug  
John Carrington •  
Catherine Case •

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Joseph Adam, organ +

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