

Saturday 19 October 2019  
West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge

# Stargazer

Adams: *The Chairman Dances*

Prokofiev: *Autumnal Sketch*

Dove: *Stargazer*

Prokofiev: *Symphony No.5*



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**Saturday 7 December 2019 at 7.30pm**  
**West Road Concert Hall, Cambridge**



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# Verdi's **AIDA**

An Opera in Concert

*Aida* Linda Richardson  
*Amneris* Miroslava Yordanova  
*Radamès* Michael Wade Lee  
*Amonasro* Richard Burkhard  
*Ramfis* Stephen Richardson  
*King* Richard Wiegold

Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra & Chorus  
*Conductor* Timothy Redmond

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**Cambridge Philharmonic presents**

**Adams: *The Chairman Dances***

**Prokofiev: Autumnal Sketch**

**Dove: *Stargazer***

Trombone: Peter Moore

**Interval**

**Prokofiev: *Symphony No.5***

**Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra**

Conductor: Timothy Redmond

Leader: Paula Muldoon

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## ***The Chairman Dances***

**John Adams (born 1947)**

### **Introduction**

*The Chairman Dances*, subtitled *Foxtrot for Orchestra*, was premiered by the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra on 31 January 1986, with Lukas Foss conducting. Adams was working at the time on what would become the opera *Nixon in China*, and *The Chairman Dances*, described by Adams as an 'outtake', was an early idea for a scene in the opera.



Although not taken directly from the final opera, *The Chairman Dances* portrays part of the action from Act III. It is the last evening of Nixon's visit and, with meetings and festivities over, the main players have retired to bed. Richard and Pat Nixon are recalling their youth and their wartime memories. Chairman Mao is also reminiscing, but with rather more stirring thoughts – thoughts of the time when the then actress and starlet, Chiang Ch'ing, later to become the famous Madame Mao, first came to his headquarters in the early days of the revolution.

In *The Chairman Dances*, Adams imagines that Chiang Ch'ing has made a dramatic entry into the Presidential Banquet. The scene was described by Peter Sellars, the director of the opera, as follows:

'Chiang Ch'ing, aka Madame Mao, has gatecrashed the Presidential Banquet. She is first seen standing where she is most in the way of the waiters. After a few minutes, she brings out a box of paper lanterns and hangs them around the hall, then strips down to a cheongsam, skin-tight from neck to ankle and slit up the hip. She signals the orchestra to play and begins dancing by herself. Mao is becoming excited. He steps down from his portrait on the wall, and they begin to foxtrot together. They are back in Yenan, dancing to the gramophone...'

### **The music**

In his early compositions John Adams was strongly influenced by minimalism, a style characterised by repetitive melodic patterns and motor rhythms. However, his use of 20th Century idioms and more elaborate harmonies and

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textures developed into a style of its own, and his orchestral works, such as *The Chairman Dances*, have become particular favourites.

The music of *The Chairman Dances* follows the imagined action as described by Sellars, beginning and ending with the intoxicating foxtrot. This builds as different instruments join in, the music later switching almost imperceptibly between major and minor keys. The forward pulse continues until a violin melody leads the way into a more unstable section and a raucous climax. The tempo then slows as Chiang Ch'ing begins dancing in her slinky costume. After a slightly quicker section, the foxtrot restarts as Mao and Chiang Ch'ing dance together, with Mao imagining that he is back in Yenan, dancing to the gramophone. The music then gradually fades away as the gramophone winds down, with piano and percussion having the final word.

## ***Autumnal Sketch Op.8*** **Sergei Prokofiev (1891 – 1953)**

*Autumnal Sketch* was given its first performance in Moscow in 1911. It is an early work and is somewhat reminiscent of Rachmaninoff's music, but it also marks the emergence of Prokofiev's own distinctive voice.

As one commentator wrote: 'Prokofiev's method of generating beauty is by dragging his music low into the darkness, pulling his listeners through unparalleled musical intensity, so that once the music finally peeks its head above the surface, the results are all the more rewarding. If there is any individual piece of his that accomplishes this, it's *Autumnal Sketch*.'



*Autumnal Sketch* was one of Prokofiev's own favourites, and he returned to it in 1914 and 1934 to make further revisions. As he wrote in his diary in 1914: 'Settled down to revising *Autumnal*. I love this piece very much and believe something very good can be made of it.' It sounds as if Prokofiev was thinking of expanding *Autumnal Sketch* into a more substantial work, but it remains quite short at 7-8 minutes in length, and is scored for a small orchestra.

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The music follows sonata form, with the first and last dark, brooding sections framing a lighter central section. The quiet opening, suggesting perhaps a dark forest, is interrupted by gleams of light from the woodwind, and leads to the introduction of a three-note rising theme which recurs throughout the piece. After further development, there is a brief pause and the second section then begins. Gradually this builds to a climax, with the three-note phrase being declaimed by the brass.

Then it is on to the last section and its darker mood, with the piece ending quietly in the same way as it began.

## ***Stargazer***

**Jonathan Dove (born 1959)**

### **Introduction**

*Stargazer* was commissioned by the London Symphony Orchestra, following a request from the LSO's then principal trombone player, Ian Bousfield. Dove composed it in 1999, but Bousfield's subsequent departure to join the Vienna Philharmonic meant that the first performance did not take place until 9 March 2007, when Bousfield played the solo part, with the LSO, under Michael Tilson Thomas.



Jonathan Dove's main output is of opera and choral works, and Dove says that he thought of *Stargazer* as a miniature opera, and was aiming to write something lyrical rather than simply a virtuoso piece for the soloist. As he explains in the notes for the premiere, Dove imagined the trombonist 'as a man with a telescope, a Stargazer, searching the night sky', while the orchestra 'would represent the constellations he observed, and would respond to what he saw.'

Dove also notes that he found that the nursery melody 'Twinkle, twinkle little star' kept coming into his mind while he was working on the piece, and despite his initial resistance to the idea, says that the tune 'eventually took over, so that the whole piece became a fantasia on it'. However, he also notes that 'it is never plainly stated at the speed you would expect to hear it sung' and becomes instead what Dove calls a 'contour' which is 'clearly audible throughout.'

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## **Structure of the work**

*Stargazer* is set in six sections, played as one continuous movement. The six sections are described by Dove as follows:

### **I. Searching the night sky**

Stargazer asks questions of the stars: “How old are you? Can you see me? Is there something you want to tell me?” The stars continue on their way. Stargazer calls to them. At first there is no answer – then, faintly at first, the stars begin to respond.

### **II. Constellations**

Stargazer calls out to different groups of stars (different sections of the orchestra) and they answer.

### **III. Arcturus and Canis chasing Ursa Major and Minor with Lyra**

Chilly arctic wind, suggested by the name of the Herdsman (Arcturus, who gave his name to the Arctic) chasing both bears (Ursa Major and Minor – Polaris, the Pole Star, is in Ursa Minor). Canis, the dog, joins the chase, and Stargazer sees Lyra (which includes Vega, the harp star – this is used to mark the North Pole).

### **IV. Gemini**

Brotherly love; duality; the coexistence of the mortal and immortal sides of man. Castor and Pollux spent alternate nights in Hades and on Olympus. In Rome they stood for Life and Death.

### **V. Orion, Pegasus**

Orion, the hunter, a giant famous for his beauty. Blinded by Oenopion (with whose daughter he was in love), he regained his sight by travelling east and gazing into the sunrise.

Pegasus, snowy white, with a mane of gold, the winged horse, was the favourite of the Muses as his hoof-marks caused their fountain of inspiration to start flowing.

### **VI. The Milky Way**

Seen by many cultures as the pathway along which the dead return to their true home in the immortal stars. Each star is a departed hero or loved one.

*Interval*

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# ***Symphony No 5 in B flat major Op.100***

**Sergei Prokofiev (1891 – 1953)**

*'I regard the Fifth Symphony as the culmination of a long period of my creative life. I conceived of it as glorifying the grandeur of the human spirit, praising the free and happy man – his strength, his generosity, and the purity of his soul.'* Sergei Prokofiev

## **Background**

Prokofiev wrote his fifth symphony in the summer of 1944. It was a critical time, with the tide of war turning decisively in favour of the allies, and the symphony – in essence a hymn to the spirit of freedom and the heroics of the Russian people – perfectly fitted the mood of the time. Prokofiev completed the work in about a month, in an intensive period at a Soviet Composers' Retreat, helped by the fact that he was able to use earlier material that he had already written.

The 'free and happy man' of the quote could also be applied to Prokofiev himself. Having left the Soviet Union after the 1917 revolution and spent the next 20 years or so in the USA and Europe, he had returned to Russia in 1936. It was a difficult time, and the loss in the purges of his friend, the theatre director Vsevolod Meyerhold, much affected him. The stresses of the time also led to the breakdown of his marriage, and the beginning of an affair with the author Mira Mendelson, later to become his second wife. However, things changed with the onset of war, when composers were in demand as part of the war effort, and what would prove to be a happy marriage to Mira meant that Prokofiev finally became secure and settled in both his professional and personal life.

## **Premiere**

The fifth symphony was premiered on 13 January 1945 in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, with Prokofiev conducting. It was a huge success, helped by the fact that the concert followed an announcement that Soviet armies had won a great victory on the River Vistula. The occasion was made even more dramatic when artillery salvos celebrating the victory sounded out, just as Prokofiev was raising his baton to begin the symphony. The pianist Sviatoslav Richter, who was in the Hall, wrote: 'When Prokofiev mounted the podium and silence set in, artillery salvos suddenly thundered. He waited, and until the cannon fire ceased, he didn't begin. There was something very



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significant, very symbolic in this. It was as if all of us – including Prokofiev – had reached some kind of shared turning point.’

The symphony was also a great success on the other side of the Atlantic. The US premiere, on 19 November 1945, was followed by a long article about Prokofiev in Time magazine. Serge Koussevitzky, who had conducted the Boston Symphony Orchestra at the premiere, wrote: ‘It is the greatest musical event in many, many years. The greatest since Brahms and Tchaikovsky! It is magnificent!’ Koussevitzky’s praise also represented something of a rapprochement with Prokofiev following the cool reception that the fourth symphony had received some 15 years before.

## **The four movements**

### *I. Andante (in B flat major)*

The opening Andante sets the mood for the symphony, and was the part of the work that most affected audiences at the time. Prokofiev’s biographer, Israel Nestyev, wrote: ‘This is perhaps the most impressive episode of the entire symphony for it embodies, with the greatest clarity, the work’s highest purpose – glorification of the strength and beauty of the human spirit.’

It opens with a slow melody played on flute and bassoon. This is taken up by the strings and further developed. The second main theme is then played on flute and oboe as the music begins to quicken. Two new motifs follow, one based on dotted rhythms and the other on a rapid semiquaver figure. The brass repeats the opening flute and bassoon theme, after which the music seems to take on a life of its own, transposing the themes into great heroic outbursts. Eventually the music settles and a long coda brings the movement to a final triumphant conclusion.

### *II. Allegro marcato (in D minor)*

The second movement is a scherzo and trio. The lively opening scherzo, played first by the clarinet and taken up by the strings, is adapted from a dance originally intended for Prokofiev’s ballet *Romeo and Juliet*. It is followed by variations on the same theme, with the whole section being driven forward by a repeated motor rhythm. Rising figures in the strings then signal the move into the central section. This starts and finishes with a mournful melody in the woodwind, with the upbeat middle section being based once again on an insistent motor rhythm. What sounds like a giant steam engine getting underway then restarts the scherzo, with the main tune reappearing as it gathers speed. There is then a brief coda and a rousing conclusion.

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### *III. Adagio (in F major)*

The Adagio is a long lament, set in sonata form. The clarinet and bass clarinet introduce a sad melody which is taken forward by woodwind and strings, underpinned by a steady rhythmic pulse as the movement develops. The slower central section begins in contemplative mood, building eventually to an anguished climax. The movement continues with a long, mournful reverie, with an extended coda bringing the movement to a quiet close.

### *IV. Allegro giocoso (in B flat major)*

The final Allegro giocoso begins with a slow introduction, following on from the Adagio. However the mood then changes as the clarinet starts the Allegro with a cheerful tune, answered by the strings with a skittering downward scale, followed by chords on the brass. Further development follows, and a second tune is introduced by the flute. The opening material then returns briefly before there is a calmer passage, with the cellos playing a chorale-like melody. Gradually, however, a more frenetic tone starts to take over, continuing as the opening tune reappears. This continues until brass and percussion beat out an insistent rhythm taking the movement to a close.

**Programme notes: Chris Fisher**

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## Peter Moore (Trombone)

Photo: Kaupo Kikkas



Nominated by the Barbican as ECHO Rising Star, over the last year Peter has given recitals at major European Concert Halls including the Concertgebouw, Musikverein, Köln Philharmonie and Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg. He also gave the UK premiere of James MacMillan's *Trombone Concerto* with the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican.

Sought after as a soloist and chamber musician Peter regularly features on BBC Radio and Television. He was a New Generation Artist between 2015-17 appearing as soloist with BBC Orchestras across the UK and, in 2018, Rubicon

released his first CD to critical acclaim.

Concert highlights include his US debut at the Spoleto Festival in Charleston, recitals at Wigmore Hall, the Hay-on-Wye Festival, the BBC Proms in Melbourne Australia, and Kumho Art Hall Yonsei in Seoul. He has appeared as soloist with the Thailand Philharmonic, Lucerne Symphony and Barcelona Wind Symphony Orchestras, among many others.

This season Peter makes his debut at the Tonhalle Zurich, and appears as soloist with the Medellin Philharmonic in Colombia and the Macedonian Philharmonic Orchestra. He is Professor of Trombone at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

At the age of 18 Peter was appointed co-principal of the London Symphony Orchestra. He was the youngest ever winner of the BBC Young Musician Competition in 2008 and was selected by YCAT in 2014.

Peter is a Yamaha International Artist.

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## Timothy Redmond (Conductor)



Timothy Redmond conducts opera and concerts throughout Europe and the US. He is Professor of Conducting at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Music Director of the Cambridge Philharmonic and is a regular guest conductor with the London Symphony and Royal Philharmonic Orchestras.

He has appeared in the UK with the BBC orchestras, the Birmingham Contemporary Music Group, Britten Sinfonia, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, English

Chamber Orchestra, Hallé, London Philharmonic Orchestra, the Philharmonia, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra, Sinfonia Viva and the Ulster Orchestra. He also has a long-standing association with the Manchester Camerata. He has conducted widely throughout Europe and the US with orchestras including the St Louis Symphony, Filarmonica Arturo Toscanini, Concerto Budapest, Orchestra della Svizzera Italiana and the Rotterdam Philharmonic.

Timothy Redmond is well-known as a conductor of contemporary music and has a particular association with the music of Thomas Adès. Since working closely with the composer for the premiere of *The Tempest* at Covent Garden, he has conducted critically-acclaimed productions of *Powder Her Face* for English National Opera, Irish National Opera, the Royal Opera House and St Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre. He recently gave the Hungarian premiere of *Totentanz*, the Irish premiere of *Living Toys* and assisted the composer for the New York premiere of the Grammy-award winning production of *The Tempest* at the Metropolitan Opera.

In the opera house he has conducted over 70 productions for companies including Opera North, English National Opera, English Touring Opera and Almeida Opera.

This season he conducts the world premiere of Roberto Rusconi's *Dionysos Rising* in Italy, Gluck's *Orfeo ed Euridice* in Oxford and he returns to Irish National Opera for a new production of *Madama Butterfly*. He gives concerts with the Britten Sinfonia, CBSO, LSO and Macedonian Philharmonic, makes debuts with the Royal Scottish National Opera and the Winston Salem Symphony, he returns for more concerts in the *My Great Orchestral Adventure*

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series at the Royal Albert Hall and he records a new disc of Jonathan Dove's orchestral music with the BBC Philharmonic.

Timothy Redmond studied at the Royal Northern College of Music, Manchester University and the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena. He furthered his studies in masterclasses with George Hurst, Ilya Musin, Yan Pascal Tortelier and Pierre Boulez and as an assistant to Elgar Howarth, Valery Gergiev and Sir Colin Davis.

## **Paula Muldoon (Leader)**



Paula Muldoon is a violinist, software engineer, and composer based in Cambridge, UK. Currently the leader of the Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra and the Norfolk Symphony Orchestra, her performing career has taken her around the world with the London Symphony Orchestra, Philharmonia Orchestra, and other major ensembles.

After an exciting 18-19 season where she soloed in Richard Strauss' *Ein Heldenleben* with the Cambridge Philharmonic and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *Scheherazade* with the Norfolk Symphony Orchestra, Paula opened

the 19-20 season by releasing *DeskNotes*, a YouTube channel dedicated to orchestral string playing. Upcoming projects include recording a CD of her own solo violin compositions and solo performances around Cambridge.

After retraining as a computer programmer, Paula now combines music with her career as a software engineer at Cambridge Cognition, where she writes code that is used for worldwide clinical trials. She is one of WeAreTechWomen's 100 Women in Tech and is on the Computer Weekly Women in Software Power List.

Paula composes music for solo violin, which she shares on Patreon ([patreon.com/FiddlersCode](https://patreon.com/FiddlersCode)). Her most recent pieces include *Woman and Cape Cod the Beautiful*, a nod to her hometown of Falmouth, Massachusetts, which was also the home of America the Beautiful lyricist Katherine Lee Bates. Her debut single, *Get Outside*, is now available on Spotify and iTunes.

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# Cambridge Philharmonic Orchestra

## **Violin 1**

Paula Muldoon  
(leader)  
Kate Clow  
(co leader)  
Alice Ruffle  
Anne McAleer  
Imogen Poole  
Jo Cumberbatch  
Margaret Scourse  
Sarah Ridley  
Nichola Roe  
Abigail Tan

## **Violin 2**

Oya Takmaz  
Emma Lawrence  
Hilary Crooks  
Roz Chalmers  
François Guérit  
John Richards  
Viola Hay  
Rebecca Forster  
Katy Rose  
Leila Coupe

## **Viola**

Ruth Donnelly  
Sophie Channon  
Edna Murphy  
Robyn Sorenson  
Sophia Shellard  
Jo Holland  
David Yadin  
Emma  
McCaughan  
Dominic de Cogan  
Jeremy Harmer

## **Cello**

Joshua Lynch  
Angela Bennett  
Linda  
Hindmarsh  
Rachel Twomey  
Catherine Wilson  
Helen Hills  
Daniel Grace  
Helen Davies  
Isabel Groves

## **Double Bass**

Sarah Sharrock  
Tony Scholl  
Alan Bowman  
Susan Sparrow  
John Richens

## **Flute**

Cynthia Lalli  
Alison Townend  
Samantha Martin

## **Piccolo**

Samantha Martin

## **Oboe**

Rachael Dunlop  
Tom Gillam  
Katy Shorttle

## **Cor Anglais**

Katy Shorttle

## **Clarinet**

Graham Dolby  
David Hayton  
Roger Fuste

## **E♭ Clarinet**

Beverley Filby

## **Bass Clarinet**

David Hayton

## **Bassoon**

Neil Greenham  
Jenny Warburton

TBA

## **Contrabassoon**

TBA

## **Horn**

Carole Lewis  
Tony Hawkins  
Gareth Edwards  
Chris Wykes

## **Trumpet**

Chris Clark  
Andrew Powlson  
Naomi Wrycroft  
Laureen Hodge

## **Tenor Trombone**

Nick Byers  
Denise Hayles

## **Bass Trombone**

Gary Davison

## **Tuba**

Stuart Beard

## **Timpani**

Dave Ellis

## **Percussion**

Derek Scurll  
Daniel Johnstone  
Peter Ashwell  
Henry Wadsworth  
Jordan Murray

## **Harp**

Lizzy Scolah

## **Piano**

Ashley  
Beauchamp

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Verdi: *Aida*

Saturday 18 January 2020

West Road Concert Hall  
Family Concert: My Musical Magical Hat!

Saturday 14 March 2020

West Road Concert Hall  
Beethoven: *Leonore Overture No.3*  
Beethoven: *Choral Fantasia*  
Mozart: *Piano Concerto in A K488*  
Mozart: *Mass in C Major 'Coronation' K317*

Saturday 23 May 2020

West Road Concert Hall  
Bartók: *Dance Suite*  
Rachmaninov: *Three Russian Songs*  
Mussorgsky: *Songs and Dances of Death*  
Rachmaninov: *The Bells*

Saturday 4 July 2020

Lecture Recital: *Mahler and Zemlinsky*

Saturday 11 July 2020

Ely Cathedral  
Zemlinsky: *Psalm 13*  
Mahler: *Symphony No.2 'Resurrection'*

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