

MOZART  
Nikolai Lugansky

Piano concertos  
Nos. 19 & 20

Netherlands  
Radio  
Chamber  
Orchestra

LEV MARKIZ

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

*Piano concertos Nos. 19 & 20*

**Piano Concerto No. 20 in D minor, KV 466**

- |                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| 1. Allegro       | 14'16 |
| 2. Romance       | 8'42  |
| 3. Allegro assai | 7'36  |

**Piano Concerto No. 19 in F major, KV 459**

- |                  |       |
|------------------|-------|
| 4. Allegro       | 11'52 |
| 5. Allegretto    | 6'53  |
| 6. Allegro assai | 6'57  |

Total playing time: 56'27

*Nikolai Lugansky, piano*

*Netherlands Radio Chamber Orchestra*

*Lev Markiz*

## Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791)

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756-1791) wrote 12 of his 27 piano concertos between 1784 and 1785, a period of especially intense occupation with this genre. With these 12 works Mozart established the piano concerto as the highly prized genre that we know today: a harmonious blend of symphonic style, chamber music and, specifically in Mozart's case, operatic elements.

Mozart entered his 19th Piano Concerto in his thematic catalogue with the date 11 December 1784. It is assumed that this was the concerto that was performed in Frankfurt in October 1790 together with the "Coronation" Concerto K. 537 as part of the celebrations of the coronation of Leopold II. For this reason it is sometimes called the "second Coronation Concerto". Mozart had good reason to make the trip to Frankfurt. In the last year of his life he was constantly short of money, the Viennese public were giving him the cold shoulder and his situation was becoming ever more desperate. By attending the coronation he hoped to draw himself to the attention of the sovereign. Mozart must have been an incorrigible optimist if he thought that this journey could provide him any real relief from his straitened circumstances. On 22 September, after pawning his silver in order to pay for the journey, he set out for Frankfurt with Franz Hofer, the husband of his sister-in-law Josepha.

- 4 The concert took place in the Stadttheater on 15 October. Because there were so few visitors, the concert, as we know from a letter of Mozart to Constanze, was not an overwhelming success: "This morning at 11 o'clock I had my concert, for which I gained a massive amount of credit, but which did not earn me very much money... Unfortunately a great *déjeuner* was being held right then by one of the princes, and there was also a parade of Hessian troops - and it was like this all the time I was here, each day something or other was happening..." Testimony is also provided by Count Ludwig von Benheim-Steinfurt, who attended the concert and entered an account of it in his diary. Among other things he wrote: "Mozart played a piano concerto of his own composition [K. 459?], charming and gentle throughout [...]. With only five or six violins, the orchestra could not help being weak, but they nevertheless played immaculately - but what devastated me was that there were so few people."

The instrumentation of the Piano Concerto in F, K. 459, is somewhat puzzling. In his thematic catalogue Mozart mentions flute, two oboes, two bassoons, two horns and strings, and also trumpets and timpani. However, the parts for trumpets and timpani have never found. It is possible that Mozart notated these two parts on a separate sheet, but in this case there are grounds for doubt, for no other F major work of Mozart's survives with trumpet and timpani parts. It is possible that he used these additional instruments only for the Frankfurt performance: trumpets and timpani were traditionally used to enhance the festive character of a work.

Mozart's Piano Concerto No. 19 is a work of miraculous invention. This phenomenon even prompted his contemporary Karl Ditters von Dittersdorf to observe that he had never seen a composer with such a wealth of ideas. But he added that he wished that he wasn't so prodigal with them, as his listeners could so easily lose their breath! The opening *Allegro* acquires its character from a martial motif. As often in Mozart, some of the thematic material is reserved for the solo part, where it is developed in an ingenious way. The *Allegretto* in C major opens with a tender 6/8 melody. This delicate music bears an unmistakable resemblance to Susanna's aria "Deh vieni" in *Le nozze di Figaro*, the successful opera Mozart was to begin composing in autumn 1784. The sparkling finale, *Allegro assai*, overflows with genial ideas and inventions. As in various late works of Mozart the contrapuntal writing is an important characteristic of this movement, but the tone is never really serious or melancholy. Once again it invites comparison with opera: Alfred Einstein saw this finale as an *opera buffa* translated into the drama of instrumental music.

Only two of Mozart's 27 piano concertos are in a minor mode, the Concertos in D minor, K. 466, and C minor, K. 491, composed respectively in 1785 and 1786. Because the use of minor modes is something of a rarity in Mozart's works, there is frequent speculation about the extra-musical significance said to underlie these works. There is no proof to support this speculation, but it is striking that Mozart chose the key of D minor for a few important works. The journey to Hell in *Don Giovanni* is placed in D minor, and this is also the predominant tonality of the *Requiem*. It is often claimed therefore that for Mozart the key of D minor represents fate.

The score of the Piano Concerto in D minor, which Mozart began in February 1785, was completed with the greatest possible haste. There was not even any time to rehearse the rondo, because the copyist was still writing out the parts just before the performance. Still, it must have been an impressive performance. After the première Mozart's father Leopold wrote to his daughter: "The concert was unforgettable and the orchestra played marvellously. After the symphonies a singer from the Italian theatre performed two arias. Then there was an excellent new piano concerto by Wolfgang [...]" A year later Leopold in a letter to his daughter gave an account of the first performance of the concert in Salzburg: "Michael Haydn turned the pages... and so had the pleasure of seeing with what artistry it is composed, how splendidly interwoven the parts are, and what a difficult concerto it is."

It is not improbable that during the première of this very concerto Mozart improvised most of the solo part. None of his cadenzas have survived, but Beethoven expressed his admiration for Mozart's minor-key piano concertos by writing cadences for the Piano Concerto in D minor. Moreover Mozart's Piano Concerto in C minor must have been an important source of inspiration for Beethoven when he was writing his Third Piano Concerto in the same key. It is also no surprise that it was this sombre, dramatic concerto that enjoyed such extreme popularity in the 19th century. Today it remains one of Mozart's best-loved works.

In the very first bars of the D minor Concerto an ominous disquiet is conveyed by the darkly throbbing bass motif, the thrusting syncopations in the strings and the finely nuanced wind entries. Although the atmosphere of menace occasionally gives way to a more rousing tone, a feeling of darkness envelops the whole of the first movement. After a quite long introduction the piano continues with a calm theme that is indirectly derived from the orchestra: it is the flute's answer to the theme in the oboe and bassoon. Later in the first movement the solo piano takes over this answering function from the flute. It is precisely these ingenious constructive devices that lend Mozart's works such remarkable unity.

The second movement, a Romance in F major, is a simple aria played by the piano, then taken over by the orchestra. An interesting feature of the part-writing in this movement is the way the thematic material is passed between soloist and orchestra; the soloist is therefore obliged to be extraordinarily alert. After the opening the tranquillity is disturbed in a brutal manner by an agitated outburst in G minor, after which the aria returns. In the furious opening of the finale, *Allegro assai*, the soloist's initial statement is succeeded by the orchestra's entry, which possesses a drive and passion reminiscent of the "Dies irae" from the Requiem. Virtuoso solo passages follow, and a quarrelsome dialogue occurs between piano and orchestra. But at the end of this stormy movement the atmosphere brightens, and in the coda, in which the trumpets play a key role, Mozart uses the second theme to work up to a masterly conclusion.

## NIKOLAI LUGANSKY

Winner of the Tchaikovsky Competition 1994

The extremely gifted Russian pianist Nikolai Lugansky was born in 1972. He was the pupil of the renowned pianist and teacher Tatiana Nikolayeva and is one of the most striking talents in the younger generation of pianists in the former Soviet Union. At the age of fourteen Nikolai Lugansky won the first prize in Tbilisi at a competition for young musicians. Since then he has given concerts in Germany, Czechoslovakia, Italy, France, Spain and Japan. In September 1990 he made his debut in Great Britain with a recital at London's Wigmore Hall.

In May and June 1991 he was a soloist with the Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra conducted by Vladimir Fedoseyev in an 11 concert tour through Japan. In November 1992, with the famous (ex-USSR) State Symphony Orchestra under Evgeny Svetlanov, Lugansky made a highly successful tour in Germany. That year he was also invited by Vassily Sinaisky to perform with the Moscow Philharmonic.

In May 1990, aged only 17, he appeared in the Utrecht Muziekcentrum Vredenburg in the Master Pianists Series, as a last minute replacement for the indisposed Maria João Pires. A sensational debut which immediately led to a reinvitation for the 1991 series. Also in 1990 Lugansky gave a recital in the Main Hall of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw in the series Five Russian Top-Talents. An appearance unanimously described as extraordinarily impressive, which led to numerous invitations. One of the highlights of Lugansky's 1994 season was his February recital in the Main Hall of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw in the Master Pianists Series.

In 1992 Lugansky's first CD was released on the Vanguard Classics label (Rachmaninov's *Etudes Tableaux* 99022). Since then he recorded two more CD's with Rachmaninov works (99009, 99091), a CD with works by Schumann (99034) and his latest CD consists of works by Chopin (99122).

After an autumn 1994 tour in Japan and Korea, Nikolai Lugansky performed to great acclaim with the Moscow Philharmonic in the Amsterdam Concertgebouw in December 1994. In September 1995 he toured Germany with the Moscow Philharmonic, before going to England for concert dates with the Hallé Orchestra. During these concerts with the Hallé Orchestra, Nikolai Lugansky was presented with the Terence Judd Award, established by the Judd family as a tribute to this brilliant young pianist who died in 1979. In January 1996 he gave a recital at the Wigmore Hall in London. In March he performed with the Philharmonia at the Royal Festival Hall in London. In November 1996 he gave concerts with the Royal Concertgebouw Orchestra in Amsterdam. Nikolai Lugansky made his American debut on July 17, 1996. His American orchestral debut was with Valery Gergiev and the Kirov Orchestra at the Hollywood Bowl in August 1996.

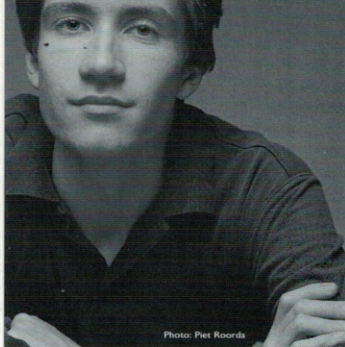


Photo: Piet Records

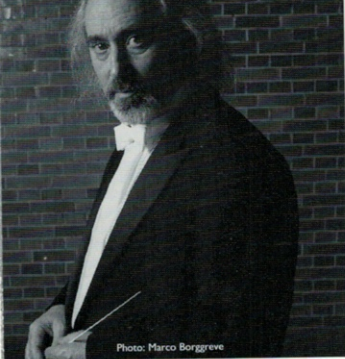


Photo: Marco Borggreve

## LEV MARKIZ

Lev Markiz was born in Moscow. He studied the violin with Yuri Yankelevich and Chamber Music with Maria Yundina at the Moscow Conservatory and later conducting with Kirill Kondrashin. Markiz started his career as a violinist and performed as a soloist and chamber musician. From 1955 until 1964, he was the leader of the legendary Moscow Chamber Orchestra. He subsequently founded his own orchestra "The Moscow Soloists" and this much acclaimed ensemble took a very special place in Russian musical life. He made over seventy records and numerous radio recordings with this orchestra, with various repertoire. Apart from that, he conducted almost all important symphony orchestras in the former Soviet Union and worked with soloists amongst others Sviatoslav Richter, David Oistrach and Emil Gilels.

14 Lev Markiz emigrated in 1981 to the Netherlands. He is a frequent guest conductor with various Dutch orchestras and has conducted throughout Canada, Israel and Europe (a.o. Stuttgarter Kammerorchester, Chamber Orchestra of Geneva, Budapest Festival Orchestra, Israel Chamber Orchestra etc.). During the prestigious Mahler celebration in the Concertgebouw Amsterdam in May 1995, Lev Markiz conducted Nieuw Sinfonietta Amsterdam, the only Chamber Orchestra invited for the Festival, in two arrangements by Mahler of Schubert's *Der Tod und das Mädchen* and Beethoven String Quartet no. 11 in F minor, op 95. Both pieces were also recorded for BIS.

From its Foundation in 1988 Lev Markiz has been Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of Nieuw Sinfonietta Amsterdam; this position he held until September 1997. He now is their Principal Guest Conductor. With this orchestra he had toured the USA, the USSR, Germany, France and Italy. Under his direction the ensemble gave many Dutch premières of 20th century Russian compositions as well as several first performances of especially for Nieuw Sinfonietta written pieces by Dutch composers. In September 1998 Lev Markiz was made a Knight of the Order of the Netherlands Lion for his extraordinary contribution to the musical life in the Netherlands.

As per September 1997, Lev Markiz is appointed Chief Conductor and Artistic Director of the Chamber Orchestra of Geneva. For the Swedish label BIS, Lev Markiz conducted a number of CD's with works of a.o. his friend and ex-compatriot Alfred Schnittke; in 1995 the first album with Mendelssohn String Symphonies was released and very well received by both the national and international music press. In the meantime also volume II, III and IV are released and also very well received by the international press. For Vanguard Classics Lev Markiz recorded three CD's with Mozart's Wind Concertos (99002, 99037, 99038). Lev Markiz and Nieuw Sinfonietta Amsterdam received an *Edison Award* for the recording of Shostakovich' *Kammersinfonien* (99033).

# NETHERLANDS RADIO CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

The Radio Chamber Orchestra, a classical orchestra consisting of 39 musicians, constitutes the basis of an ensemble which can be reduced or expanded depending on the requirements of the scores. This flexibility of size is particularly important for modern music, since it gives composers more possibilities in their choice of instruments than would an 18th-century orchestral make-up. This approach allows the Radio Chamber Orchestra to perform a repertoire covering no less than 300 years.

Although Frans Brüggen relinquished the post of artistic director for the orchestra in July 1994, he is still with the orchestra as a permanent guest conductor. He is succeeded by two principal conductors, Ton Koopman and Peter Eötvös. Both of these conductors have achieved world-wide fame, one as conductor of the Amsterdam Baroque Orchestra, the other with such credits as conducting the Ensemble Intercontemporain of Paris. This paradoxical choice of conductors is consistent with the very nature of the Radio Chamber Orchestra, which regularly hovers on the border between the possible and the impossible. By involving two conductors, each with his own musical background, with the Radio Chamber Orchestra, we hope to contribute to bridging the gap between classical and modern music which is only being widened by the centrifugal force of the specialised ensembles with their own audiences and concert series.

The orchestra is internationally noted for its interpretations of modern music, having given first performances of several works by living composers both from The Netherlands and elsewhere. As a result of this reputation the orchestra regularly performs in European festivals of modern music. In addition, the orchestra is intensely active in performing the classical repertoire.

15

The Netherlands Radio Chamber Orchestra is one of the five major musical ensembles under the aegis of the Music Centre of the Netherlands Radio and Television supervised by Edo de Waart.

Dear music lover,

Vanguard Classics hopes you have enjoyed this recording. If you would like to be informed about new releases on the Vanguard Classics label or if you would like to receive a Vanguard Classics catalogue, we invite you to write to: Vanguard Classics - P.O. Box 227- 1200 AE Hilversum - The Netherlands.

Vanguard Classics can also be reached by E-mail: [vanguardclassics@silverminds.nl](mailto:vanguardclassics@silverminds.nl)

Production: Kompas CD Multimedia BV, Zeewolde, The Netherlands / Recording producer: Ted Diehl  
Engineering and editing: Bert van der Wolf / Recording dates: 28-30 August, 1998 / Recording location: Studio 5, Music Centre of the Netherlands Radio and Television, Hilversum, The Netherlands / Piano tuning: Michel Brandjes / Executive producer: Marcel Schopman / Technical Realisation: Peters • Moestl • Saglia