

even worse public response. Prokofiev found a partial solution to this problem by extracting six numbers from the opera, revising them, and assembling them into a six-movement concert suite in 1924.

"The Ridiculous People," adapted from the opera's prologue, depicts the arguments between the various characters (represented by distinct instrumental ideas) and the ultimate subjugation of their ideas by the forceful Ridiculous People themselves. In "Scene from Hades," Prokofiev uses eerie instrumental effects to represent a card game played by Fata Morgana in Hell. The "March," made famous by dozens of arrangements (it was a staple of violinist Jascha Heifetz's recitals), finds the sick Prince being carried to a party contrived to make him smile. The movement's march rhythms are continually inflected by strident, "wrong-note" sonorities. The remainder of the suite is comprised of "Scherzo" (here reworked into an effective orchestral miniature), a romantic interlude ("The Prince and the Princess"), and "Flight," a comic romp in which the villains are finally routed.

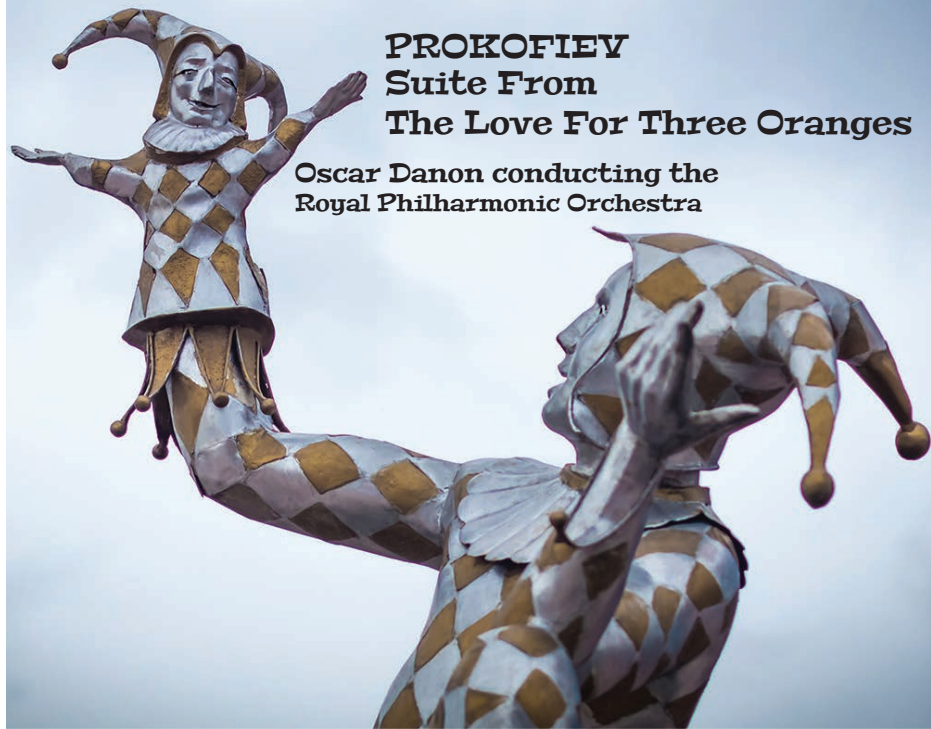
# STRAVINSKY

## Petrushka



**PROKOFIEV**  
**Suite From**  
**The Love For Three Oranges**

**Oscar Danon conducting the**  
**Royal Philharmonic Orchestra**



When Igor Stravinsky returned to the score of his 1911 ballet *Petrushka* in 1947, he did so having dedicated much of his creative energies during the intervening decades to developing a more economical, streamlined, objective style. On one hand, then, the 1947 revision of the work might be considered a retroactive application of the composer's neo-Classical tendencies. On the other hand, the revised version brings out certain elements of the work that had been part of its initial creative conception -- even before Stravinsky had determined to use the musical ideas in a ballet.

In fact, Stravinsky initially undertook *Petrushka* as a kind of compositional reprieve between the completion of the ballet *The Firebird* for the Ballets Russes in 1910 and the commencement of the score for *The Rite of Spring*, for the same troupe, in 1913. He imagined a work for orchestra with a prominent piano part; the pianist he imagined as some kind of clownish puppet come to life, "exasperating the patience of

the orchestra with diabolical cascades of arpeggios." The impresario of the Ballet Russes, Sergey Diaghilev, heard in the excerpts Stravinsky played for him the possibility of another ballet, and the work was thus expanded from its original concert scope to its full theatrical realization.

The 1947 version of *Petrushka* returns to the music something of its original character and adapts it for concert rather than stage performance. As the second of Stravinsky's three "Russian Period" ballets, the 1911 production had called for rather large orchestral forces; the revised score trims most of the wind parts from four players to three and sharpens the textures. Also, the piano itself is given pride of place, helping to articulate the bitonal harmonies that, in the ballet, had been the title character's musical signature.

Sergei Prokofiev's comic opera *The Love for Three Oranges*, Op. 33 (1919) won a place in the repertoire only with great difficulty. First produced in 1921, the work was greeted with rather dismal reviews and an

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1 Prokofiev Suite from The Love For Three Oranges

Stravinsky Petrushka

2 Tableau I 10:04

3 Tableau II 4:17

4 Tableau III 6:14

5 Tableau IV 13:32

Recorded at Walthamstow Assembly Hall by RCA for Readers Digest 1963

Producer: Charles Gerhardt

Engineer: Kenneth Wilkinson



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