



Vasily Petrenko. Photo: Anna-Julia Granberg



Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra. Photo: CF Wesenberg

Vasily Petrenko

Q&A

LAWO Classics July 2019

Mr Petrenko, you conducted the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra for seven years, including four years as Principal Conductor before you also became head of the Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra in 2013. Each orchestra has its own traditions and its own favorite repertoire. How is the work in Oslo different from the one in Liverpool?

Every orchestra in many ways reflects mentality of the place its based, and Norsk mentality is quite different from English. But what is more important - both orchestras share a passion for music, passion to improve and go forward, every day, all the time. Searching for truth in classical music is an endless process and I'm so glad that we're constantly on this journey!

The parallel leadership of two such renowned orchestras simultaneously certainly offers opportunities, but also, possibly, challenges. How did you organize the respective concert programs and admission schedules for these two different orchestras?

Work ethic is different in Norway and UK, for example, the holiday period in Oslo is mid-June to mid-August and in Liverpool it is mid-July to September. Concert programmes have some dif-

ferences too, mainly because (and quite rightly, I think!) one of the duties of an orchestra is to perform music by local composers and support local culture. So, there are more Norwegian (and Scandinavian) pieces in Oslo programmes and more UK music in Liverpool. But, of course, the main core is classical repertoire and we're so lucky to have had so much music written over last 300 years!

For some time now your recordings have been released on the Norwegian classic label LAWO Classics. How did this cooperation come about?

LAWO Classics is quite young but very progressive company. We were glad that a local classic label can record the Oslo Phil with such precision and quality and we hope for many more projects to come together!

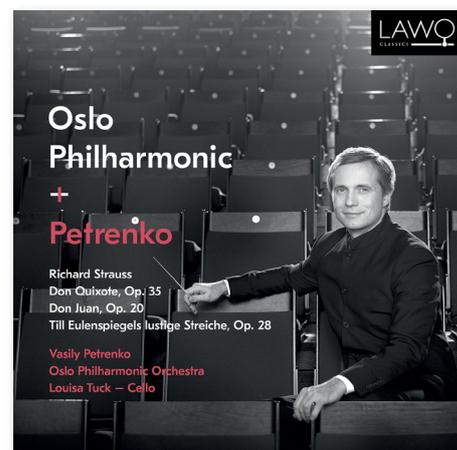
So far, you have been mainly devoted to Russian composers, now you expand your focus to Richard Strauss. The first of a series of planned recordings of his symphonic poems has just been released. What fascinates you about this composer, in particular?

Not just Russian composers, to be fair - a series of Elgar's recordings has been recently released

with the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic, and other recordings too... Strauss's *Tone Poems* are one of the pinnacles of all classical music written for orchestra. They have incredible ideas, emotions, orchestrations, philosophy; Zaratustra, Don Juan, Alpine Nature or Strauss himself. To perform and record them you need an excellent orchestra and they make milestone in its history, for a conductor it is enormous pleasure and challenge to explore them and get the best from the orchestra.

Will the Strauss recordings, which will be released successively on LAWO Classics, remain with a selection from the symphonic work of the composer, or are you planning on recording a complete series?

At the moment, it is only the tone poems, but who knows, what will happen in a future? I like his operas too...



(LWC1166)

RICHARD STRAUSS

DON QUIXOTE, OP. 35

DON JUAN, OP. 20

TILL EULENSPIEGELS LUSTIGE STREICHE, OP. 28

Vasily Petrenko - Conductor
Oslo Philharmonic Orchestra
Louisa Tuck - Cello