

EXPERIENCE L.A.

Los Angeles Philharmonic: *Romeo & Juliet* with Gustavo Dudamel and Benjamin Millepied

Thursday, October 18, 2018
Walt Disney Concert Hall, Los Angeles

KNOW BEFORE THE SHOW

- ◉ Prokofiev's *Romeo & Juliet* (1935) was rejected as "undanceable" by the Bolshoi Ballet. It was first performed in 1938 with choreography by Ivo Psota, and after star ballerina Galina Ulanova performed the leading role in 1940, ballet dancers warmed to it and found ways to make Shakespeare's story more contemporary through Prokofiev's music.
- ◉ This performance is a collaboration between L.A. Phil, led by legendary conductor Gustavo Dudamel, and L.A. Dance Project, led by innovative choreographer Benjamin Millepied.
- ◉ The venue, Walt Disney Concert Hall, is the work of celebrity architect Frank Gehry. The interior was specially designed to create an exceptional acoustic experience.

PROGRAM

The complete *Romeo & Juliet* by Sergei Prokofiev

SERGEI PROKOFIEV

Sergei Prokofiev was a major Russian (Soviet) composer, known for synthesizing classical-music tradition with the innovations of the twentieth century. He wrote in a wide range of genres, including symphonies, operas, ballets, and even film music. Among many points of note in a rich, decades-long career, Prokofiev

- > participated in the European avant-garde of the 1920s and '30s
- > composed works for the Ballets Russes and impresario Serge Diaghilev
- > created an opera of Tolstoy's *War and Peace*
- > composed a monumental cantata with texts by Marx and Lenin for Stalin's 60th birthday
- > wrote the score for Sergei Eisenstein's film *Alexander Nevsky*, and
- > saw his ballet *Romeo & Juliet* produced with star ballerina Galina Ulanova in the leading role



Prokofiev lived—and composed—through major historical shifts, including World War I, the Russian Revolution, and World War II. He was born in 1891 in what is now Ukraine and was then part of the Russian Empire, and died in 1953 in Moscow, by then a part of the Soviet Union. Identified as a child prodigy, Prokofiev left the agricultural village where he was born to study at the St. Petersburg conservatory in the early years of the twentieth century. As an adult, he lived both in the Soviet Union and abroad, and like many Soviet artists, experienced the shifting currents of the Soviet state. In 1940, Prokofiev was among several Soviet composers censured by the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party for “formalism.” In 1957, he was posthumously awarded the Soviet Union’s highest honor, the Lenin Prize.

GUSTAVO DUDAMEL

Gustavo Dudamel, born in Venezuela in 1981, is the music and artistic director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and music director of the Simón Bolívar Symphony Orchestra of Venezuela. A dynamic violinist and conductor, he has worked with major orchestras around the world and is acclaimed not only for his extraordinary musical talent, but also for his explosive energy.

BENJAMIN MILLEPIED

Benjamin Millepied is a choreographer, filmmaker, and former professional dancer. From 2002 to 2011, he was a dancer with New York City Ballet. He also created choreography for the company, and for other major companies, including American Ballet Theatre, Berlin Staatsoper, and Mariinsky Ballet. In 2006, he became choreographer-in-residence at the Baryshnikov Arts Center in New York, and in 2010, his choreography was featured in Darren Aronofsky’s ballet thriller *Black Swan*, in which he also starred. After retiring from New York City Ballet, Millepied moved to Los Angeles in 2012 and founded L.A. Dance Project. From 2013 to 2016, he was the director of the Paris Opera Ballet, which he left to focus on L.A. Dance Project and his own choreography and filmmaking.

In addition to L.A. Dance Project, Millepied is a founder (with composer Nicholas Britell) of a film production company, Amoveo, and a tech startup called Artform that aims to promote artists and art.

L.A. DANCE PROJECT

L.A. Dance Project develops, creates, supports, and presents world-class dance in Los Angeles. Composed of an internationally acclaimed dance company, a performance space in the downtown L.A. Arts District, and a program of media initiatives, LADP seeks to foster dance-centered artistic collaborations across disciplines, cultures, and communities in Los Angeles and around the globe.

LOS ANGELES PHILHARMONIC

Critics have described the Los Angeles Philharmonic as “forward-thinking,” “contemporary-minded,” and “the most creative, and, therefore, the best orchestra in America.” Founded in 1919, the LA Phil moved into Walt Disney Concert Hall in 2003. Under the 17-year tenure of music director Esa-Pekka Salonen (which ended in 2009), the LA Phil joined the ranks of the world’s elite orchestras. Salonen worked as a champion of new music, challenging Los Angeles audiences to listen to the unexpected. The orchestra has continued to innovate under the leadership of Gustavo Dudamel. The LA Phil performs a regular season of concerts at Disney Hall, as well as a summer season at the Hollywood Bowl.

WALT DISNEY CONCERT HALL

Walt Disney Concert Hall was designed by architect Frank Gehry to be one of the top acoustically conscious concert halls in the world. Construction began in 1999 and took four years to complete. It was funded by a major contribution from Walt



Sergei Prokofiev



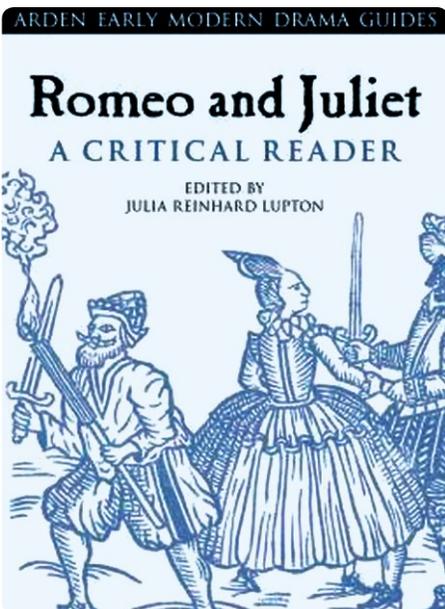
Gustavo Dudamel



Benjamin Millepied



Walt Disney Concert Hall, Downtown Los Angeles



Disney's widow, Lillian Disney, and various other donors, totaling \$240 million. The building's bold stainless-steel exterior makes it instantly recognizable as a Gehry building. Inside, the hardwood construction aims to perfectly funnel the sounds of music. Esa-Pekka Salonen said of the hall: "Everyone can now hear what the LA Phil is supposed to sound like."

FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- ⦿ How did this performance differ from other versions of *Romeo & Juliet* that you have encountered? Did you experience the characters or themes in a new way?
- ⦿ Did you notice the special acoustics of Disney Hall? How did it sound different from other venues in which you have heard live music?
- ⦿ How do you think living through two World Wars and a revolution affected Prokofiev as a composer?
- ⦿ Given that this performance was a collaboration between L.A. Phil and L.A. Dance Project, do you think there was anything specifically "L.A." about the content or form?

IF YOU LIKED TONIGHT'S PERFORMANCE, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT

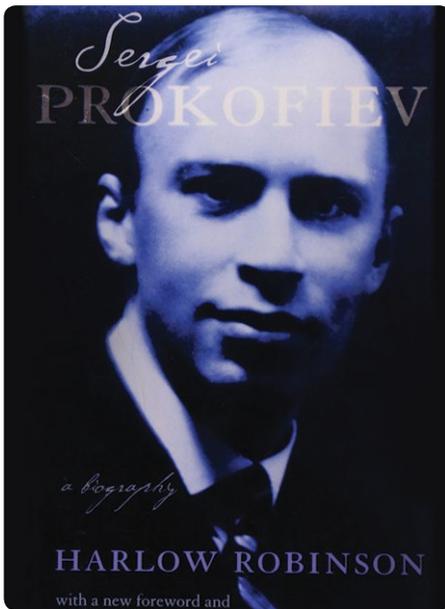
- ⦿ L.A. Phil
laphil.com
- ⦿ L.A. Dance Project
ladanceproject.org
- ⦿ Performances by the USC Thornton Symphony and USC Kaufman School of Dance
music.usc.edu/usc-thornton-symphony-orchestra
kaufman.usc.edu
- ⦿ Some of L.A.'s other classical-music ensembles, such as the Los Angeles Chamber Orchestra or Jacaranda Music
laco.org
jacarandamusic.org
- ⦿ Glorja Kaufman Presents Dance at the Music Center
musiccenter.org/tickets/events-by-the-music-center/Glorja-Kaufman-Dance

DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

ANTHONY ANDERSON of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* and the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Those with a call number (e.g., books) are physical items which you can find in our campus libraries. Those without a call number (e.g. journal articles and databases) are electronic resources, which you can access through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at libraries.usc.edu.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

- ⦿ Grigorovich, Yury Nikolaevich, Demidov, A., and Grell, Dwight. *The Authorized Bolshoi Ballet Book of Romeo and Juliet*. Neptune City, NJ: T.F.H. Publications, 1990.
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS: RARE-OVER DML LVL 7 GV1587.8.G73 R664 1990
- ⦿ Lupton, Julia Reinhard. *Romeo and Juliet: A Critical Reader*. London: Arden Shakespeare, 2016.
DOHENY MEMORIAL LIBRARY: PR2831 .R66 2016



- ⦿ Robinson, Harlow. *Sergei Prokofiev: A Biography*. New York, NY: Viking, 1987.
MUSIC LIBRARY: ML410.B566 R35 2001
- ⦿ Sanders, Julie. *Shakespeare and Music: Afterlives and Borrowings*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2007.
MUSIC LIBRARY: ML80.S5 S25 2007
- ⦿ Tunstall, Tricia. *Changing Lives: Gustavo Dudamel, El Sistema, and the Transformative Power of Music*. 1st ed. New York: Norton, 2012.
MUSIC LIBRARY: MT3.V4 T86 2012

RECOMMENDED AUDIO VISUAL MATERIALS

- ⦿ Czinner, Paul, Prokofiev, Sergey, MacMillan, Kenneth., Georgiadis, Nicholas, Nureyev, Rudolf, Fonteyn, Margot, and Lanchbery, John. *Romeo and Juliet*. West Long Branch, NJ: Kultur, n.d.
MUSIC LIBRARY: MUSDVD 54
- ⦿ Prokofiev, Sergey, and Ozawa, Seiji. *Romeo & Juliet Ballet in Four Acts and Nine Scenes*. Hamburg: Deutsche Grammophon, 1987.
MUSIC LIBRARY: CD-AUDIO 6569MUS
- ⦿ Zeffirelli, Franco, Havelock-Allan, Anthony, Brabourne, John, Brusati, Franco, D'Amico, Masolino, Whiting, Leonard, Hussey, Olivia, et al. *Romeo and Juliet*. Widescreen version. Hollywood, CA: Paramount Pictures, 2000.
LEAVEY LIBRARY: LVYDVD 11695

SELECTED DATABASES

(Descriptions provided by database providers.)

Arts & Humanities Full Text: “This database features hundreds of titles covering Art, Architecture, Design, History, Philosophy, Music, Literature, Theatre and Cultural Studies.”

IIPA (International Index to the Performing Arts): “IIPA draws its current content from more than 100 international performing arts periodicals from 9 countries, and also indexes feature performing arts articles and obituaries appearing in *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. IIPA covers nearly all aspects of the world of the performing arts, from the most scholarly studies to the latest crazes. Most IIPA records in the current coverage (1998 forward) contain an abstract.”

JSTOR: “A growing full text collection of core social science, humanities, and science journals.”

