



**Patricia Kopatchinskaya, violin**

**Polina Leschenko, piano**

**Camerata Bern**

**Sonja Starke, Suyeon Kang and Sibylla  
Leuenberger, violin**

**Marko Milenkovic and Friedemann Jähnig, viola  
Angela Park and Thomas Kaufmann, violoncello**

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**Sunday 14 July 2019 20:00**

**Hindsgavl Festival**

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**George ENESCU (1881 – 1955)**

String Octet in C major, Op. 7, 39'

Intermission

Sonata no. 3, Op.25 for violin and piano

## **George Enescu (1881-1955)**

In Denmark, the composer George Enescu is virtually unknown, which is a great shame. Enescu is undoubtedly one of the greatest geniuses in music history, and Romania's most prominent composer. Today his home town is called George Enescu, and both Romania's biggest international airport and a palace in Bucharest bear his name. The cellist Pablo Casals called Enescu "*the greatest musical phenomenon since Mozart*", and like Mozart, Enescu was an almost unnatural infant prodigy. With five years he composed his first works and was admitted to the Vienna Music Conservatory when he was seven, as the youngest ever.

Having turned 13 he moved to Paris and became a student of the French composers Fauré and Massenet. He made his international breakthrough with *Two Romanian Rhapsodies* in 1902, and until his death he was one of the leading figures as composer, conductor, violinist and teacher. Among his famous students we find the violinist Yehudi Menuhin.

His hometown became Paris for the rest of his life, except for a few years in the 1930s when he was married to a Romanian Princess (!) and lived in Bucharest. But in spite of his French connections, he remained inspired by the folk music of his homeland all through his life. In combination with his idolization of J.S.Bach's counterpoint technique and a general late romantic expressiveness, Enescu's musical style is unique in the music of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **String Octet in C major, Opus 7 (1900)**

Enescu's String Octet, which he composed at the tender age of 19, is 40 minutes of intense music. It fully demonstrates the young composer's ability to use his musical ideas, and is an early example of his unique sense of counterpoint. The work is almost over-ambitious for a teenage composer. For the four movements is one long sequence, which in itself makes up a colossal sonata form for eight equal instruments. Enescu wrote about this project: *"An engineer, planning his first suspension bridge, can't have been more anxious than I was when putting down the notes to the paper"*.

The opening movement presents six different motives which are the basis for the rest of the work. The restless, pulsating rhythm which we hear under the first theme, functions as the motor in the work, over which Enescu is spinning his net of counterpoint. Together the six themes create a picture of the world. Romanian folk music, Viennese late romantic music and French boulevard atmosphere mingle in a relaxed way.

The second movement is an explosive and quite intoxicating fugue. It sounds like Bach on drugs. Slowly, though, the balloon deflates, and almost without our noticing, the work moves into the slow third movement where a rhapsodic melody creates seductive nocturne-moods. But the rhythmic pulsating element in the accompaniment still drives the music forward – only now in a more slow tempo.

Echoes of the themes from the first movement lead into the tempestuous finale,

a delirious waltz, catapulting the six themes around and leading the work to its grandiose conclusion.

### **Sonata no 3 for Violin and Piano, Op 25 (1926)**

The String Octet may not be composed in an obvious Romanian style, but the Violin Sonata no 3 is! Enescu even calls it written *"dans la caractère populaire roumain"* (in Romanian folk style). The piano part imitates the traditional instruments of the gypsies, the cimbalom and kobza, and the violin imitates grasshopper, lark and a human voice. In this way we are brought out into a rural, Romanian dream world, while the musicians are challenged to the maximum technically, musically and conceptually.

With unfamiliar scales and drowsy, inciting atmospheres you enter into the exotic Romania from the very first tone. The movement follows a gipsy-musical form with contrasting sections moving from deep melancholy to gay dances. The miraculous second movement is the jewel of the sonata. The introverted introduction is poignant with the overtone-playing in the violin and the frozen drone bass in the piano. When the movement gains speed, the violin is at the same time the dancing people and the twittering birds. But suddenly the party is over. The movement finishes just as lyrical and unworldly as it began.

The finale is a rondo with a theme from a folkdance melody from Moldavia in the North-eastern part of Romania.

*Text: Mathias Hammer  
English translation: Susanne Lange*

## The artists

**Patricia Kopatchinskaja** likes to bake, also on the podium. But where most musicians bring a nice, finished cake, she just brings on the ingredients and bakes the cake in front of the audience. The oven is never the same, and even the ingredients may vary. Sometimes the cake is no success, and sometimes it's a different cake than was expected.

The comparison is made by Patricia Kopatchinskaja herself: "Das ist meine Art, zu backen. Und meine Art, Musik zu machen." For the same reason she also always plays after a score, otherwise she would bring only one memorized and crystallized version of the piece on stage – and play accordingly. With the notes in front of her, she has the possibility to ask them what they want to tell us right now, in this very "oven" – ie in this concert hall with exactly this audience. The answers are often surprising and maybe even confusing, but at once get a voice through Kopatchinskaja's Pressenda-violin. And having the notes in front of her, she never gets completely lost – no matter how unexpected their instructions seem to be right now.

In short: only with the score in front of her does she feel completely free. Free to not just play the notes, but to play what's behind the notes. "All this while sweating like a pig, having a thousand strangers to stare at you at the same time". This robust comparison is once more made by the violinist herself. Taking it a bit further, probably no other pig in the music business has been rolling with

more enjoyment in the mud of freedom than precisely Patricia Kopatchinskaja.

But nevertheless: the duo with **Polina Leschenko** is a true duo. Watching Patricia Kopatchinskaja playing with an orchestra, you see her two intensely speaking eyes moving from musician to musician, and if a timpanist is reacting to her playing, he'll get an answer back on every single beat he plays. This chamber-music approach is fully noticeable in pure chamber-music, of course, and not least in the permanent constellation with Leschenko. Their CD *Deux* recently received the P2 Award (Danish Radio) as International Album of the Year.

**Camerata Bern** is not chosen randomly as partners, either. Bern is Kopatchinskaja's home town, and she is the artistic manager of Camerata Bern. Like her, they effortlessly move around in all periods of music history, playing on both modern and historical instruments. They are well-trying and enthusiastic partners in crime when an unsuspecting audience must be offered a cake which tastes somewhat differently from what they expected, and suddenly it seems to fill out a very big hole in your musical life which you didn't know existed.

*Text: Ulrik Damgaard Andersen  
Translation: Susanne Lange*

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