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I MUSICI DE MONTREAL
Artistic Director and Conductor
YULI TUROVSKY

<i>Violins:</i>	Eleonora Turovsky <i>Leader</i>	<i>Violas:</i>	Brian Bacon
	Alison Eldredge		Mary Harris
	Lucia Hall		Vincent Lapointe
	Allison Lyne		
	Marisol Medina	<i>Cellos:</i>	Claude Lamothe
	Françoise Morin		Alain Aubut
	Jasmine Perron		
	Christian Prévost	<i>Basses:</i>	Costantino Greco
	Peter Purich		Daniel Seagall
	Natalya Turovsky		

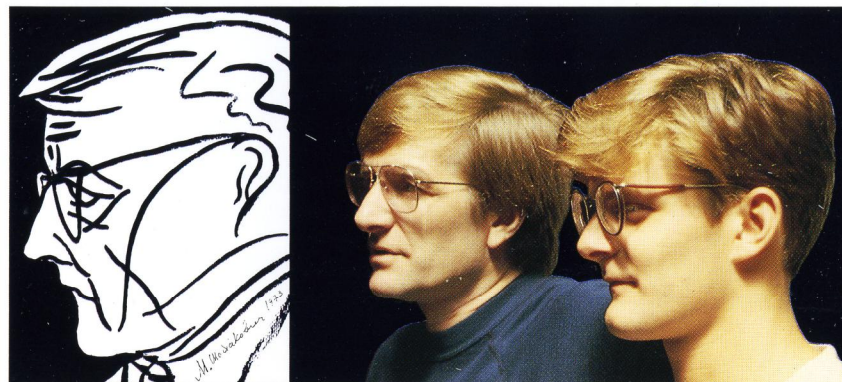
I MUSICI DE MONTREAL has been working together as a group since October 1983, under the leadership of **YULI TUROVSKY**, the well-known cellist and member of the famous Borodin Trio. The ensemble launched its career with a sparkling performance of the Handel Concerti Grossi Op. 6, recorded for CBF-FM and broadcast in Montreal in February-March 1984. The musicians are graduates of Montreal's finest music institutions: McGill University, Université de Montréal and Conservatoire de Musique de Québec. Other recent recordings include Pergolesi Concertini and Boccherini and Vivaldi Cello Concertos with Yuli Turovsky as soloist/director.

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Chandos**CONCERTO NO. I****DIGITAL**

For Piano, Trumpet and Strings Op.35

CHAMBER SYMPHONY Op. 110a
SHOSTAKOVICH
DMITRI **MAXIM** **DMITRI**
Conductor (junior) Piano

**I MUSICI DE MONTREAL****JAMES THOMPSON** Trumpet**YULI TUROVSKY** Artistic Director and Conductor

It is difficult to imagine two compositions more different from each other than the First Piano Concerto and the Chamber Symphony of Shostakovich recorded here. In his creative span they are separated by 75 Opuses, 27 years of his life, awards and persecutions, war and terror, the birth of his children and the death of his nearest relations.

Both compositions are written in the same key but are at the same time as far from each other as C Major and C Minor.

The Concerto was composed in 1933 and in the same year performed by Shostakovich as soloist with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Shtidri. Shostakovich was then 27 years old and his compositions were performed and published not only in Russia but also in America and Europe. His opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* was produced in opera houses all over the world and enjoyed constant success. His reputation as one of the most outstanding composers of the 20th century was already indisputable. It was into these circumstances that he launched his First Piano Concerto with its astonishing wit, sparkling with joy on the one hand and sincere lyricism and dreaminess on the other. At times the development of the two middle lyrical movements of the work is most dramatic, but it never transgresses into the atmosphere of tragic doom and hopelessness that was so typical of Shostakovich's later style.

Something similar can be said of Shostakovich's humour, which to a greater degree determines the character of the 1st Movement, not to mention the Finale which is a kaleidoscope of endless jokes. Here we find a surprise at literally every step: a completely unexpected turn of melody leading the theme to a "wrong key", or an accent appearing unexpectedly at what seems a most unsuitable place. At times it sounds as though we can hear street noises in which deliberately banal

melodies are detectable, forming an integral part of the musical landscape of a large city. At one moment we get the impression that the street noises become a brawl, escalating unexpectedly and developing into a parody-like quotation from Haydn's Piano Sonata performed *fortissimo* on a trumpet. Some researchers also find traces of a theme parodying Beethoven's Rondo *Rage over a lost penny* in one of the piano cadenzas of the Concerto. The comic effect of this is intensified by having a fragment of a popular march as a counterpoint to this theme, usually performed by a brass band and here sounding deliberately silly.

In another cadenza Shostakovich seems to take us to one of those old cinemas where as a youth he was compelled to earn his daily bread and keep his family by accompanying silent films on the piano – films where people on the screen moved almost twice as fast as in real life. Shostakovich here deliberately creates an atmosphere of parody. Not without reason have different critics, when writing about his Concerto, found "allusions" to themes of other composers including Chopin and Rachmaninov.

In this connection I am reminded of those legends from the annals of the Moscow Conservatory of Music which get passed on from generation to generation and which I heard when I was still a student. After a performance in Moscow, almost all of the city's most prominent musicians assembled in Shostakovich's dressing room to congratulate him. One of them, a well-known pianist and professor of the Moscow Conservatory, was renowned among other things for his caustic tongue. While congratulating Shostakovich, but not wanting to miss an opportunity to be sarcastic, he said: "A remarkable Concerto, but tell me Dmitri Dmitrevich, why does your first theme begin like

Beethoven's *Appassionata*?", to which Shostakovich (according to the legend) answered in his quick, nervous speech: "That indeed is so; you see, I wrote it so that any idiot could understand it!" I do not know how true this story is, but apparently it reflected the composer's intentions.

Speaking of the "language" and imagery of this concerto, one cannot but make a comparison with the literary language of Shostakovich's friend Zoschenko, a writer whom he greatly admired and who was later subjected (as was Shostakovich) to a merciless persecution lasting many years. After the 1917 revolution which completely disrupted the whole vast Russian Empire, the illiterate or semi-literate speech of the masses, who poured from everywhere into the large cities, became mixed with "learned" and foreign words of the new "Marxist" phraseology, creating something highly comical and frightening at the same time. All this was reflected in the short stories of Zoschenko and other writers of that period. This was also transformed in a special way in the musical language of Shostakovich, but what is remarkable is that Shostakovich still retains his gaiety and laughter. His humour has not turned into sarcasm and is not yet poisoned by bitterness.

The orchestration of the Concerto includes a trumpet which almost takes the part of a second solo instrument, and strings whose virtuoso part transforms them into equal partners of the soloist, rather than mere accompanists. Each section of the orchestra has its own important and often detailed and developed solo, resulting in a composition which is a true example of a chamber work.

On this recording, we have for the first time three generations of the Shostakovich family together: the composer Dmitri Shostakovich; his son Maxim, the conductor; and his grandson, pianist Dmitri Shostakovich junior. As well as bringing a tragic note into his music,

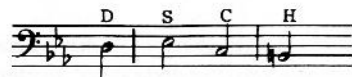
Shostakovich also brought into the life of his family a final tragic note: he died on his grandson's birthday.

* * * * *

Shostakovich prefaced his 8th Quartet, which became the basis of the Chamber Symphony, with this dedication: "In Memory of Victims of Facism and War." And when this new composition was discussed at one of the unavoidable meetings of the Union of Soviet Composers, it was quite routine that one of the critics, while expressing a favourable opinion of the Quartet, began his speech with a stock phrase which would normally have passed without attention as a common Soviet cliché: "The composer Shostakovich in his new Quartet, together with the whole Soviet Nation and the working people of the whole world, angrily protest . . .", but here Shostakovich interrupted him. He jumped and shouted almost hysterically: "No, no, no! It is I, you must understand, it is I who personally protest; it is my very own protest!" and then as if exhausted he sat down and did not take any further part in the discussion. I do not know if this incident means anything to Western readers, but I do know that for a person living or having lived in the Soviet Union it is full of significance and throws a light on certain mysteries in the music as well as in the dedication.

The Quartet was composed in 1960, when it became apparent that the illness which afflicted Shostakovich was incurable. It is possible that he then began to think about death as a reality and felt the necessity to sum up his own life as well as the era with which he was inextricably bound up. The 8th Quartet is in its own way a musical autobiography. It begins with a fugue-like exposition of the main 4-note motif of the

composition. This motif is quite simply the musical signature of the composer built on notes, the German notation of which makes up his initials:



Here Shostakovich without doubt was following in the footsteps of another composer, whose influence on him was so great, and who wrote his musical testament for posterity and died leaving unfinished the last "Chapter" but succeeded in leaving his musical signature:



Apropos, I once experienced something like a mystical horror or perhaps even mystical rapture: when playing a fugue from the 5th Suite for solo cello I suddenly recognized the musical signature of Shostakovich woven into the texture of Bach's music, composed nearly 200 years before the birth of Shostakovich. A coincidence, but what a significant one!



The signature D. Shostakovich is the *leitmotif* of the whole composition; it threads its way through all five movements with modifications and elaborations, but is always recognizable. This is indeed what it proclaims: "No, no, no! It is I!"

The Quartet is also autobiographical in that Shostakovich makes wide use of quotations from his own compositions which were most dear to him and which played an important part in his life. Already, in the 1st Movement, we hear a quotation from his 1st Symphony which he composed while still a 19-year-old student at the Leningrad Conservatory of Music, and which made him world famous.

The terror and horror of the 2nd Movement erupt, or rather, burst into the Jewish theme of his Piano Trio (1944). The whole 2nd Movement comes abruptly to a stop on the same themes with the suddenness of a bullet killing outright. In the 3rd Movement, a theme from the 1st Cello Concerto (1959) is introduced as if by chance, in order to transform it in the 4th Movement into a theme-symbol of pitiless and destructive force.

If Beethoven talked about recurring notes in a theme in his 5th Symphony as "Fate knocking at the door", so one can say the same about the recurring, frequent sinister chords of the 4th Movement. But Fate here appears dressed in the uniform of the Secret Police. The whole country had waited at night for dozens of years for the knocks at the door, in a state of passive numbness. So too Shostakovich waited.

One more quotation follows, but not from his own music. This melody is an old prison song known to every schoolboy in the Soviet Union: "Tormented by heavy bondage . . ." The narration in this song is in the first person and it is clear without any explanations that again: "It is I! It is I myself who is tormented by oppressive bondage",

Shostakovich, "the captive genius" in the words of A. Solzhenitsyn, seems to say.

And finally his own quotation – from the opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*. Without doubt the fate of this opera left an indelible impression on the rest of Shostakovich's life and destiny. In 1936, on personal instructions from Stalin, an editorial was printed in the newspaper *Pravda* about Shostakovich's opera – "Chaos instead of Music." It accused Shostakovich of every possible sin and the article instigated a hatred campaign against him which continued at lesser or greater intervals until Stalin's death, a persecution from which he never fully recovered.

In the 8th Quartet Shostakovich quotes the aria from his opera in which his heroine Katerina Ismailova addresses her beloved, "Serge my dear one", for whose sake she committed a crime, was deported to Siberia and was betrayed by him. The solo cello playing this music without doubt forms the quiet but tense culmination of the whole composition. After this climax Shostakovich returns (in the 5th Movement) to the themes of the 1st Movement, which sound helpless and devastated as if repeating: "Life is a circle, from ashes to ashes..."

Returning to the dedication and to that short outburst by Shostakovich during the discussion of his Quartet, one can conclude that, as a humanist and witness of this era, one of the most terrible eras in history, he was protesting against *any* kind of fascism, by whatever name it is called, and not only the one he was officially permitted to protest against "together with the whole Soviet Nation." He was protesting against any kind of repression and annihilation of human beings and he did all in his power to be rightly understood.

The instrumentation of the Quartet for chamber orchestra was

masterfully realised by Rudolf Barsahi during the composer's lifetime and was approved by him. It was performed many times by the Moscow Chamber Orchestra.

Programme notes by **YULI TUROVSKY**

In the life of every artist there are creative events which he regards with special feeling. This record marks such an event in my life because all three elements – the composer, the music, the soloist – are of my mind and heart, my flesh and blood. The work on this record thus will always remain in my memory.

MAXIM SHOSTAKOVICH, 1984

MAXIM SHOSTAKOVICH, son of the famous composer Dmitri Shostakovich, was born in 1938 in Leningrad. He began his studies at the Moscow Central Music School and continued at the Moscow Conservatory under the famous pianist and professor Jacob Flier. Later he studied conducting with such outstanding conductors as Nicholas Rabinovich, Alexander Gauk, Igor Markevich and Gennadi Rozhdestvensky. When still a student at the Central Music School he gave the world première of Shostakovich's 2nd Piano Concerto, which was dedicated to him. After graduating from the Conservatory he became assistant conductor of the Moscow State Orchestra and later on conductor of the Moscow Philharmonic which he conducted on many tours.

From 1971-1981 Maxim Shostakovich was the Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Moscow Radio Symphony Orchestra. With this and with other leading Soviet orchestras he has recorded more

than 60 albums, among which are most of his father's Symphonies including No. 15, of which he gave the world première.

Since 1981, when he and his son were granted political asylum, he has lived in the United States, where his first public appearance was at Capitol Hill in Washington conducting the National Symphony for an audience of more than 60,000. Since then he has continued an active concert life, guest conducting the New York Philharmonic, the Los Angeles Philharmonic and other American orchestras. He has also appeared frequently in Europe, with the London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, London Symphony, Bayerische Rundfunk, Oslo Philharmonic and in Israel, Korea, Japan and Hong Kong where he is principal guest conductor.

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (Junior) was born in 1961 in Moscow and from his early years showed a great interest in music. At the age of six he began his studies in the Central Music School under Elena Hoven, his father's teacher. In 1978 he made his debut as a soloist with the Moscow State Orchestra and he has since performed in many major cities of the Soviet Union as well as in Italy and Germany.

Since 1981 he has lived with his father in America and performed with such orchestras as the Philadelphia, Chicago, Detroit and Los Angeles Symphonies. He has also played in Europe, Israel, Japan and Hong Kong, at the same time continuing his studies at the Juilliard School of Music in New York.

He recently played Shostakovich's Piano Concerto No. 1 in Carnegie Hall in a concert dedicated to the great Russian fighter for human rights, Andrei Sacharov.

JAMES THOMPSON, born in Frankfurt, Germany, was educated at the New England Conservatory, Boston where he studied trumpet with Roger Voisin. He was a prize winner in the 1979 Maurice André International Trumpet Competition and he has held principal posts with Seattle Opera, the Phoenix Symphony Orchestra and the Orquesta Sinfonica Nacional in Mexico City. He has for several years been a regular soloist with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra and his recordings include the Dompierre Concertos.

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Front cover Drawing of Shostakovich by Maxim Shostakovich. Cover Photographs by Jean-Claude Adam.

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SHOSTAKOVICH: PIANO CONCERTO NO. 1 - Shostakovich etc. Chandos CHAN 8357

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DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH (1906-1975)



CONCERTO NO. 1 for piano, trumpet and strings in C minor, Op. 35

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------|--------|--------------|
| 1 | I Allegro moderato | (5:19) | |
| 2 | II Lento | (7:00) | |
| 3 | III Moderato | (1:27) | |
| 4 | IV Allegro brio | (6:23) | (TT = 20:14) |

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH piano
JAMES THOMPSON trumpet
I MUSICI DE MONTREAL
conducted by
MAXIM SHOSTAKOVICH

CHAMBER SYMPHONY for strings in C minor Op. 110a

Transcribed by Rudolf Barshai from
String Quartet No. 8

- | | | | |
|---|------------------|--------|--------------|
| 5 | I Largo | (5:12) | |
| 6 | II Allegro molto | (3:04) | |
| 7 | III Allegretto | (4:38) | |
| 8 | IV Largo | (6:30) | |
| 9 | V Largo | (4:00) | (TT = 23:24) |

I MUSICI DE MONTREAL
conducted by
YULI TUROVSKY

(TT = 43:49)

DDD

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contribution from **SOFATI LTEE (Canada)**

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