

MAXIMILIAN STEINBERG
PASSION
WEEK

PLG
PARK LANE GROUP

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English
Chamber
Choir
Guy Protheroe
conductor

and music by

Rachmaninov
Rimsky-Korsakov
Tchaikovsky *and*
Grechaninov

St James's Church,
Piccadilly

London W1J 9LL

Friday 7 April 2017

at 7.30pm

Pre-concert talk at 6.30pm

Tickets £15 *Information overleaf*
for booking and Royal Academy of Arts Concessions

Presented by the English Chamber Choir and the Park Lane Group

Registered Charity Nos: 1153396 (ECC) ; 252205 (PLG)

Programme

Sergei Rachmaninov Bogoroditse Dievo (Hail Mary)
Nicolai Rimsky-Korsakov Se Zhenikh gryadet (Behold, the Bridegroom comes)
Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky Blazheni yazhe izbral (Blessed are they)
Aleksandr Grechaninov Ne ryday mene, Mati (Do not lament me, O Mother)

INTERVAL

Maximilian Steinberg Passion Week

For a few years the arts thrived in post-revolutionary Russia. After Stalin seized power in 1927 there followed a period of brutal suppression which affected not only art but also the Russian Orthodox Church (or indeed any kind of religion). Maximilian Steinberg's *Passion Week* was the last major sacred work composed in Russia after the 1917 Revolution (written between 1921 and 1923) and was never performed in his lifetime. Last year the English Chamber Choir became the first European group to perform this masterpiece in its entirety and that programme is being repeated to complement the Royal Academy of Arts Exhibition *Revolution; Russian Art 1917-1932*.

From time to time musical scholarship tends to throw up hitherto forgotten composers, and in most cases the reasons for their neglect are sadly rather obvious. But just occasionally treasures are found, and Steinberg is undoubtedly one such discovery. Born in Lithuania in 1883, into a cultured Jewish family, he went to St Petersburg to study natural sciences and music. He became a pupil of the famous Russian composer Rimsky-Korsakov, remaining with him as his personal assistant on travels to Paris for Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes* and also marrying his daughter, which required him to convert to the Russian Orthodox Church.

Unlike many of his contemporaries, including Stravinsky and Rachmaninov, who emigrated following the Revolution, Steinberg remained on the staff of the Conservatoire in St Petersburg, where his pupils included Shostakovich, until his death in 1946. He didn't immediately start writing music for his new Orthodox faith when he married in 1908, but did so increasingly in the post-Revolution years. The score was recently re-discovered and edited by the leading scholar of Orthodox music, Alexander Lingas, who will be giving the a pre-concert talk).

The English Chamber Choir has a long tradition of, and international reputation for, performing music from the Eastern Orthodox traditions, presenting works by contemporary composers including John Tavener, Christos Hatzis, Ivan Moody and Mikis Theodorakis, as well as the great liturgies and vigils of Rachmaninov and Tchaikovsky.

For this performance, Steinberg's work (which is a concert setting, not a liturgy) will be prefaced by some individual gems from his immediate predecessors: his father-in-law Rimsky-Korsakov, his contemporary Grechaninov (who also wrote a *Passion Week* in post-Revolutionary Russia) and Rachmaninov and Tchaikovsky, who need no further introduction.

New York Times: "The Steinberg is a treasure. "

Tickets: £15 to include a glass of wine or soft drink

Concession £12 to Patrons and Friends of the Royal Academy of Arts and Park Lane Group
bookable on line at www.englishchamberchoir.bpt.me (with booking fee)
or at the door from 6pm on the night of the concert (availability permitting)

www.englishchamberchoir.co.uk
www.parklanegroup.co.uk