



## Agenda (Brussel Deze Week)

Date : 04/12/2015

Page : 45

Periodicity : Weekly

Journalist : --

Circulation : 61297

Audience : 0

Size : 386 cm<sup>2</sup>

**AGENDA**



CLASSICAL MUSIC

'PEOPLE ARE MUCH MORE  
INQUISITIVE THAN WE THINK'

# STEPHANE GINSBURGH

© COLETTE VANEYCKE

**EN** | Flagey and the Queen Elisabeth Music Chapel have joined forces for the sixth edition of the Music Chapel Festival, which has a special focus on Russian Classics. **ELISE SIMOENS**

**A**s well as numerous concerts and fringe activities involving students, teachers, and alumni of the Music Chapel, the festival also features a number of guest performers. The Brussels pianist Stéphane Ginsburgh, for example, who will play two sonatas by Sergey Prokofiev in the opening concert. His recital coincides with the release of his brand new recordings of Prokofiev's complete piano sonatas (on Cypres).

"I'm not exclusively involved in Russian music," Ginsburgh tells us. "But I am crazy about the music of the first half of the twentieth century. Artistic-intellectual life was at an amazingly high level back then. Sadly, the music of that time is still not as well known as it deserves to be." So Ginsburgh has an irresistible urge to immerse himself in the work of composers like Schoenberg, Skryabin, and Prokofiev. "Concentrating so much on Prokofiev was really a matter of chance. I had already studied some of his sonatas and I really got to like them. Now that I have recorded the sonatas on a CD, I am determined to explore the rest of his oeuvre. Prokofiev lived a long and intense life, composing all the time. Although, of course, he had to contend with the restrictions imposed by the Russian regime, he was anything but a blinkered composer. He didn't have the Internet, but he was in communication with a truly impressive range of artists and scholars. And did you know that Prokofiev also had close contact with the film director Sergey Eisenstein?"

Ginsburgh hasn't opted for Prokofiev's best-known tunes.

"Everyone knows *Peter and the Wolf*, of course. That music is actually more than just a musical story for children. It gives a very accurate picture of Prokofiev's style. In it, you experience the magical spirit of Russian storytelling and folklore. At times, the mood is playful or dreamlike; at others, it is witty and bursting with energy. Those abrupt changes of humour are characteristic."

### ANSWERS FROM THE PAST

Prokofiev's music isn't simple. For Ginsburgh, however, that is no reason to neglect it. "The public loves discovering new things. People are much more inquisitive than we are inclined to think. I don't really like that word 'public', by the way. It sounds too much like 'consumer'. The relationship people have with art has nothing to do with consumption. It's about a quest to tune in to something that transcends your limited individual existence. In that sense, a listener is not essentially different from a performer. The one difference is that I'm the one who is on the concert platform. In the end, we are all faced with the same fundamental questions about life. The art of that fertile period when Prokofiev was alive can certainly provide many answers to the questions we find ourselves struggling with today."

### MUSIC CHAPEL FESTIVAL

8 > 12/12, Flagey, [www.flagey.be](http://www.flagey.be)  
Recital Stéphane Ginsburgh: 8/12, 18.00