Program Notes

Reinhold Glière's (1875-1956)
Horn concerto in B-flat major, Op.91
I. Allegro
II. Andante
III. Moderator - Allegro Vivace

Reinhold Glière (1875–1956) was a composer and teacher whose music is known for its expressive melodies, rich harmonies and Romantic character. Although he lived through a period of major musical change, his works retained a strong connection to nineteenth-century traditions. His Horn Concerto was written in 1951 following discussions with Valery Polekh, principal horn of the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra. Polekh demonstrated the instrument's range and expressive possibilities, inspiring Glière to explore its potential as a solo voice. He premiered the concerto in Leningrad on 10 May 1951, with Glière conducting.

I

The first movement, Allegro, opens with a bold theme that introduces the horn's heroic character. This contrasts with a gentler, singing melody, revealing the instrument's warmth and sensitivity. Broad phrases, flowing runs and changes of register demand both technical control and musical flexibility. The cadenza gives the soloist an opportunity to bring these qualities together in a passage of individual expression.

II

The second movement, Andante, turns towards a more intimate atmosphere. Long melodic lines unfold over a gentle accompaniment, allowing the horn to sing with a quality close to the human voice. Rich harmonies and moments of tension gradually lead towards an emotional climax before the music returns to a quiet, reflective ending.

III

The final movement begins with a stately Moderato introduction before moving into the energetic Allegro vivace. Its lively rhythms and folk-like melodies suggest the spirit of Russian dance. Quick passages alternate with lyrical phrases, bringing a sense of playfulness alongside the concerto's grander moments. The music gathers momentum towards a brilliant and triumphant conclusion.

"I chose Glière's Horn Concerto because of the emotions it brings out in me. Its warm melodies give me a sense of comfort, while its powerful moments make me feel excited and confident. I am especially drawn to the second movement, which feels like a quiet, heartfelt song. The contrast between these tender moments and the joyful energy of the finale makes the concerto meaningful to me. Through this performance, I hope to share those feelings with the audience"